THE KEY

TO

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BEING

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

BY

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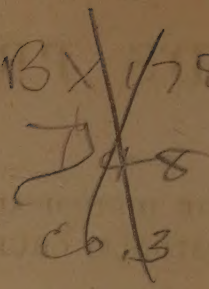

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NOTE TO CHEAP EDITION

The Key to the World's Progress was first published in the spring of 1906. The Author died in the following November. This Edition is issued under the auspices of the Catholic Truth Society, and bears the *imprimatur* of the Archbishop of Westminster. Its object is to present in a compendious form an aspect of the Church which may be found scattered up and down the works of various Catholic writers, particularly those of Cardinal Newman. The history of the world, so runs this argument, is only intelligible in the light of Christianity, and Christianity as a permanent factor in the life of man depends upon the Catholic Church. The Church is divine, patently supernatural in every age, her whole chequered history a continual dispensation of Providence. Such being its theme, the book is naturally divided into two parts, the first dealing with the course of civilisation and the meaning of progress, the second with the course of Christianity. As to the first, no comment is needed; as to the second, the Author has confined himself to certain antinomies or seeming contradictions in the history of the Church, which are a scandal to the ignorant, but which illustrate in fact from many points of view that supernatural character which it was his special object to demonstrate. These antinomies are ten in number:—

1. The Church and Culture.
2. The Church and Prosperity.
3. Christian Morality.
4. The Church and the State.
5. The Social Question.
6. Scandals and Sanctity.
7. Liberty of Conscience.
8. Heretics and Schismatics.
9. Development.
10. Defeat and Victory.

There is an additional chapter entitled "The Explanation of the Miraculous" containing a detailed account of recent cures at Lourdes.

Certain acknowledgments of indebtedness to various writers made by the Author in the first edition have not been retained in an explicit form in the present cheaper reprint.

BERTRAND W. DEVAS.

CONTENTS

PART I.

THE COURSE OF CIVILISATION.

SECTION		PAGE
1.	Efforts to reach a philosophy of history	1
2.	Need of a principle of selection	2
3.	Meaning of civilisation, culture and progress	3
4.	Difficulties in the comparison of times and places	4
5.	Schedule for making a specific comparison	5
6.	Balance of loss and gain	6
7.	Apparent paradox on progress	6
8.	The manifold facts of retrogression	8
9.	Pantheism, Materialism and Theism as solutions of the world problem	9
10.	Difficulties of Theism	10
11.	Christianity's claim to solve the difficulties of Theism	11
12.	Distinction of Fore-Christians, Jews, Christians and After-Christians	12
13.	The After-Christian Moslems	13
14.	The After-Christians of France	15
15.	Other examples	16
16.	The Fore-Christians	17
17.	Claim of the Catholic Church to solve the difficulties of Christianity	18
18.	Analogous difficulties in non-theological matters	19
19.	Intellectual and moral reasons for the obscurity of God	19
20.	Application of this obscurity to the Church	20

PART II.

THE COURSE OF CHRISTIANITY.

21.	Ten antinomies of the Christian Church	22

CHAPTER I.

THE CHURCH AND CULTURE.

SECTION		PAGE
22.	Ground of the reproaches of ignorance and illiteracy	22
23.	The foundations of æstheticism	24
24.	The Church and all forms of art	25
25.	Philosophic culture and the Church	26
26.	Her golden mean in philosophy	27
27.	Her inevitable conflict with each time-spirit	27

CHAPTER II.

THE CHURCH AND PROSPERITY.

28.	Seeming opposition to material civilisation	28
29.	Yet its support—by checking reckless greed	29
30.	By asserting the dignity of duty and labour	29
31.	By upholding family life	30

CHAPTER III.

CHRISTIAN MORALITY.

32.	The preaching of abjection and asceticism	31
33.	Hostility of the world and its doctrine of pleasure	32
34.	This pleasure not for the masses, but for the few only	33
35.	Disillusion even for these	34
36.	Joyfulness of Christianity	34

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHURCH AND THE STATE.

37.	Nationalism ever a trouble to Christianity	35
38.	But regulated not ignored by the Church	36
39.	Church autonomy opposed to the State	37
40.	Yet the Church the prop of the State	37
41.	Making obedience and government easy	38

CHAPTER V.

THE SOCIAL QUESTION.

42.	Meaning of diversity of wealth and service	39
43.	Recognition of slavery by the Christian Church	41
44.	Yet the Church the very soul of emancipation	41
45.	Modern labour problems and socialism	42
46.	Justice but not equality upheld	44
47.	Social reform combined with moral	44

CHAPTER VI.

SCANDALS AND SANCTITY.

SECTION		PAGE
48.	Fact of scandals	45
49.	Extreme parties	46
50.	Scandals foretold and explained	47
51.	The ordinary and the heroic observance of the Christian law	48
52.	Examples of Christian family life	49
53.	The saints and their importance	50
54.	Historical examples	51
55.	The consensus of experts	52

CHAPTER VII.

LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.

56.	The meaning and supremacy of conscience	53
57.	The meaning of freedom and its harmony with law	54
58.	Popular character of ecclesiastical intervention	55
59.	The history of religious intolerance	56
60.	The "modern" presumption and its distortion of history	57
61.	Weakness of the theory of toleration	58
62.	Change of circumstances but not of principles for the Church	59

CHAPTER VIII.

HERETICS AND SCHISMATICS.

63.	Horror of disunion in the Early Church	60
64.	Facts of heresy and schism	61
65.	Origins and pathology	62
66.	*Via media* in caricature	63
67.	Invisible membership of the Church, and Christian family life of dissidents	64
68.	Providential functions of heresy and schism	65

CHAPTER IX.

DEVELOPMENT.

69.	Uprising of the historical spirit	65
70.	Growth of the theory of development	66
71.	Explanation of the theory of development	67
72.	Changes in discipline and devotion	68
73.	Caricatures of development	69
74.	Importance of the theory	70

CHAPTER X.

DEFEAT AND VICTORY.

SECTION		PAGE
75.	Apparent failure of the Church	70
76.	Historical examples	71
77.	Calamities the prelude to victory	72
78.	Perennial calumny	73
79.	The witness of the children	74
80.	The need of an explanation	75

CHAPTER XI.

THE EXPLANATION OF THE MIRACULOUS.

81.	Denial of the possibility of the miraculous	75
82.	Denial of the fact of the miraculous	76
83.	Catholic doctrine of the supernatural taken as an hypothesis	77
84.	Found alone to explain all the observed facts (as magic and possession)	78
85.	Character of Catholic miracles	79
86.	Specific examples of miracles	80
87.	The miraculous in its fitting place	82

EPILOGUE.

88.	*Lux inter umbras et imagines*	83

PART I.

THE COURSE OF CIVILISATION.

1. EFFORTS TO REACH A PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY.

MANY writers have sought in recent years and many still seek a meaning in man's history, an explanation of the course of society, a forecast of its future. Such names as the growth of civilisation, the philosophy of history, the science of sociology, social dynamics or social evolution are some of those chosen to express a science, as yet desired rather than attained, which is to solve the riddle of the universe. The keenness of the desire is shown by the eager welcome of one theory of evolution after another, though as yet their apparent deficiency is their common failure to agree with the detailed facts of history.[1] All the while the need of a valid theory grows daily greater. The very progress in historical research during the last twenty-five years has rendered specialisation a necessity both for teachers and students; only a few years within a restricted area can be effectively portrayed by any one man; and without some general theory to be our guiding star, we must lose our way and cannot reach a fit estimate even of the narrow time and place which are the special object of our study. We must have first a framework into which our portion may be fitted, a totality of which it may be reckoned a part.

But who will provide a guiding principle in harmony with history and statistics? Who can find order among materials so complicated and obscure? Who can hope to succeed where so many have failed, and to be borne safely through this rugged pass already white with the bones of a thousand dead theories? If we read Dr. Flint's *History of the Philosophy of History*,[2] we may well be startled at the inefficiency of theory after theory displayed in that gallery of ghosts; and fresh years have added to the fruitless theories. Yet in spite of these examples, and the warnings of the late Dr. Henry Sidgwick,[3] and the

[1] For example, how reconcile Hegel's philosophy of history with the case of Chinese civilisation; Comte's three stages with Indian history; Buckle's theory of the subordination of man to his physical surroundings with Egyptian history or with a comparative view of Greek and Phœnician colonisation; how reconcile the Darwinian theory of Marx and his followers on the economic interpretation of history, even in the cautious re-statement by Prof. Seligman, with the widespread phenomenon of decay and degeneration; how reconcile Mr. Kidd's brilliant theories with the details of the Greek Orphic religion, or with the social history of Rome, or with recent statistics of population?

[2] This work, published in Edinburgh in 1893, is practically the second edition of his *Philosophy of History in Europe*, published in 1874; but the earlier volume must still be consulted for the author's account of German theories from Leibnitz and Lessing to Lotze and Hermann. Some additional criticisms are given by Dr. Flint in his *History of Classifications of the Sciences*, 1904.

[3] Some attempts at sociology, weighed in his delicate balance and found wanting, are described in his presidential address of 1885 to the British Association, and in *The National Review* of 1894, both reprinted as Papers vii. and ix. in the posthumous volume, *Essays and Addresses*, 1904. He deals with the sociological theories of Comte, Herbert Spencer, Schaffle, Pearson and Mr. Kidd, notes the lack of continuity of teaching, of consensus of experts, and of effectual prevision in the attempted science; and shows how each writer has started *de novo*, built his own foundations, and displayed in relation to the others a portentous disagreement. In the latest address (1899), reprinted in this collection as Paper xi., Sidgwick seems more ready to allow the existence of sociology, having before him the facts that professorial chairs of sociology can be found in America as well as sociological handbooks for students; still he brings no fresh evidence to alter his previous and reasoned conclusion that such a science was not yet constructed, only adumbrated. We may be confirmed in this caution by the singular variety and obscurity of opinion among the *Sociological Papers* recently published for the Sociological Society (Macmillan & Co., 1905).

despair of Prof. Graham,[1] the author has this of encouragement, that when all is ready it needs but a poor instrument to give the last feeble stroke; that the latest comer has by his very late coming an advantage; that the recent progress of science, physical and historical, has redoubled this advantage; that he is not constructing a sociology or science of history but offering a key to unlock the materials of construction.

2. NEED OF A PRINCIPLE OF SELECTION.

Perhaps, indeed, it may be asked what is the need after all of any historical theory? Cannot we suffer historians without prejudgment to pursue their narrative in peace, and the facts to speak for themselves? But facts themselves are dumb, and a historian is no purveyor of an indiscriminate collection of facts, is no unscientific chronicler, but precisely one whose narrative is the fruit of a process of reasoning. For out of the vast mass of recorded facts, a confused and unintelligible heap, he must select what is pertinent, relevant, important, characteristic. Even as a skilled lawyer extracts from a mass of evidence what is pertinent to the question at issue, so the historian must pass his materials through a series of sieves of increasing fineness before they are ready for history; he must know what special facts are to be searched for, must grasp what is worth remembering, discern amid a crowd of trifles the leading features of the society of which he writes, show order and drift amid the maze of facts, and among those that deserve any mention determine their proper place and relative importance.

But to do this he must have something previous to his observation; some previously established general propositions, some theoretical anticipations, some criterion to judge what is relevant or irrelevant, what is characteristic or merely exceptional, what is of vital or little importance; and any simple inductive process is triply confused in the case of historical science by the multiplicity of causes, by their complicated interaction, by the frequent loss certain or suspected of many pertinent facts that have dropped from the historical record.[2] And the example of serious historians shows that it is no mere accumulation of facts taken at random, nor a blind induction which guides them and leads them to such contradictory results, but rather for each historian his own implicit or explicit assumptions, tacit understandings, an impalpable notion of reasonableness, critical feeling, personal conceptions and historical tact, that determine his choice of facts and the issue of his argument.

A theory therefore is needed beforehand: no gazing at facts will itself provide one. Before we enter the labyrinth we must have a clue, and a lamp before we enter the forest of obscurity. Antecedent to any history we need a philosophy of history for the selection, the adjustment, the appreciation, the limitation of the manifold material. Unity is before and above all number; the whole must precede the parts; and, "in order to have possession of truth at all we must have the whole truth," and if we have not a true view we must make for ourselves a false one, as every day can be seen in the extravagances of undisciplined talent and the narrowness of complacent ignorance. As of knowledge in general, so of historical knowledge in particular, there must be some architectonic science that is the arbiter of the claims and place of the manifold specialists. If history is not to be aimless and unprofitable, we must in some way map out the Universe, know the relative disposition of things, and see in history a various and complicated drama with interacting parts and a grand significance. "You must be above your knowledge, not under it, or it will oppress you; and the more you have of it the greater will be the load." Moreover, to history as to all knowledge applies the principle that almost every statement may be in a sense true and yet may be perverted and made false because it is not the whole truth; and that what is true under one aspect only, is therefore altogether insufficient. The political exhortation to think imperially can be transferred with greater precision and certainty to the scientific field. A high protecting power, a sovereign science maps out the territory of each subordin-

[1] *English Political Philosophy from Hobbes to Maine*, London, 1899, p. 302, where he abandons in despair all attempts at a sociology.

[2] Among English writers Cornewall Lewis, Walter Bagehot, Herbert Spencer (in his *Study of Sociology*), and above all Mr. Keynes (*Scope and Method of Political Economy*, chap. vi. and note B to chap. ix.) and Cardinal Newman (*Grammar of Assent*, chap. ix., § 3, and *Idea of a University*, especially Discourses iv. and vi.) have thrown light on this—the historical—department of logic.

ate science, "acts as umpire between truth and truth, and assigns to all their due order of precedence". If, then, we are not to confess our failure and idly acquiesce in a barren scepticism, we need an imperial theory of history that shall serve as a fruitful hypothesis, and that the severest test of ascertained fact shall not be able to dissolve.

3. MEANING OF CIVILISATION, CULTURE AND PROGRESS.

To make our search easier we must determine, at least for these pages, the meaning of the words progress, civilisation, and culture, that are in all men's mouths and block the way with their obscurity.

Civilisation is most conveniently described as the condition of a large group of men displaying the following seven characteristics:—

First, the possession of a city worthy of the name; not the extended villages of the Germans described by Tacitus or of the Gauls till a short time before the Roman Conquest. Secondly, some degree of political order and power; not a clan system like that of the Scotch Highlanders described in *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*. Thirdly, some proficiency in the industrial arts, in agriculture, manufactures, mining, building, and transport; not the rude agriculture of the Kaffirs in Mashonaland, the negroes in Nigeria or the aboriginal tribes in the forests of Central India. Fourthly, some proficiency in the fine arts, in architecture, sculpture, painting and music; not the simple decorations of the royal palaces in Dahomey or Ashanti or the Celtic ornamentation in pre-Roman Britain. Fifthly, some knowledge of philosophy, history and physical science, above the standard of the peasant commonwealth of the fifteenth century Swiss. Sixthly, a written literature; not the unwritten songs of the heroic age of poetry, such as the old Greek or Norse or Celtic epics. Seventhly, a small portion of the people differentiated as an upper class with considerable wealth and leisure; not the simple equality of Red Indian tribes, or the scanty difference of social position among pastoral peoples without settled abodes or accumulation of wealth.

Most of these characteristics of civilisation allow of variation; and one country may be more civilised than another, because either its cities are more numerous or its means of communication and production more effective, or its art and literature more splendid, or its science more profound.

Again, these characteristics are clearly divisible into material and intellectual; the special word *culture*, though sometimes used for civilisation in general, is oftener used for intellectual as distinct from material civilisation, and is confined to proficiency in the fine arts, in literature, in historical and physical science.

Hence in examining two societies, if the first is more wealthy and orderly than the second, with more cities and better communications, it is the more civilised of the two *materially*. If the second can show better works of art, literature, music, pure science and learning, it is the more civilised of the two *intellectually* or more cultured. But neither society can be set down absolutely as more civilised than the other or less civilised. Each excels in certain characteristics of civilisation, and is deficient in others.

And civilisation, if we take this view of it, is not to be measured by religion, morality or general happiness. No doubt the word can be stretched so as to include them; but becomes valueless by the inclusion, and we should be involved in the fruitless paradox that the Romans in the height of their civilisation were in some most important aspects less civilised than the illiterate barbarians of the North. Whereas the fruitful comparison is rather that of the ideals and religion among barbarians, such as the Scythians of the time of Darius or the Norsemen of the tenth century, with the ideals and religion among civilised nations, such as the Carthaginians in the fourth century before Christ, or the Saracens of the Bagdad Caliphate in the height of their culture some twelve hundred years later. In like manner it is fruitful to compare the respective vices and virtues, the respective distress and contentment of civilised and uncivilised societies, rather than to place virtue and contentment among the characteristics of civilisation, and by this ill use of words to throw history into confusion. It is well then to follow St. Augustine, who was an observant witness of the society around him, and marked off precisely its elaborate civilisation from its moral conditions. He distinguishes seven grades of the human soul, the first of which (*animatio*) we share with plants, the second (*sensus*) with animals, but the third (*ars* or civilisation) is man's own. Then, after describing in glowing colours

the political and social structure of the Roman Empire, the orderly government, the agricultural and industrial arts, the fine arts and architecture, the libraries and schools, the wonders of music, of literature, of the mathematical and historical sciences, he marks how all this magnificent abundance is the common possession of the souls that are good and of the souls that are evil.[1] And he tells us in a later work how all the wonderful inventions of which the world is full, and whereby this mortal life is adorned, are the work of the human mind, not the work of grace or the way whereby immortal life is reached.[2] Nor is it without significance that of the seven steps upward attainable by man, civilisation is only the third, and four remain above it, so much greater and higher than the sphere of the physical and intellectual is the sphere of the moral and the spiritual.

The word *progress*, no less than civilisation, requires to be used with precision, and precisely in these pages is used to express an increase in the quantity or quality of some good.[3] Obviously the narrower the good the greater the precision; to speak, for example, of the progress in the science of geology among specialists during the last twenty-five years rather than of the progress of the knowledge of geology among the English people; or to speak of the progress of Danish agriculture during this period rather than of the progress of European agriculture. Hence although we can apply the word progress to civilisation as a whole, we can seldom say more than what is vague or uncertain. If we distinguish material from intellectual civilisation we can make our statements more precise; for example, that the Roman Empire of the second century after Christ showed in material civilisation a great advance over the first century before Christ, but in intellectual civilisation a decline; or that Spain in the first half of the seventeenth century compared to the second half of the fifteenth century displayed great progress intellectually (with her five stars in Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Velasquez, Murillo and Calderon), but retrogression materially. But if in either of these two instances we sought to determine whether in civilisation as a whole there had been retrogression or progress, we should be met by the difficulty of having no common measure for comparing Roman roads with the poems of Virgil or for comparing a flourishing woollen manufacture with the pictures of Velasquez.

4. DIFFICULTIES IN THE COMPARISON OF TIMES AND PLACES.

Even if we look only to the material civilisation of different times and places the difficulties of comparison are very great. For though we seem to have in money a common measure and an easy means of expressing the sum of external and material goods, we find our measure continually failing us. First, the purchasing power of gold or silver is ever varying according to time and place, and though a diligent calculation can make allowance for these variations in the wholesale prices of free and open markets,[4] the difficulty of making any such allowance is increased a hundredfold in the case of the vast majority of purchases, namely, the retail prices actually paid day after day and varying immensely according to the locality, the social standing, and the respective combination of buyers and sellers. Secondly, wherever a large proportion of material goods are never bought or sold, our money measure fails us; for example, much of the produce of peasant cultivators for their own domestic consumption, the free waters of navigable rivers, the free fuel, building material and game in a land mostly covered with forest, and the abundance of open ground for pasture and recreation in a thinly peopled country. Thirdly, the variety of human necessities makes elusive a merely monetary measurement of material civilisation; for a people cannot be called more civilised (materially) because a cold, damp climate requires costly provision of fuel and clothing, more elaborate houses, even more abundant food than in Sicily or Andalusia. Fourthly, no money measure will enable us to explain the paradox that the amount of wealth in a given country at a given time is no absolute quantity but depends considerably on the manner of its distribution among the inhabitants. For as

[1] *De quantitate animae*, cap. xxxiii., sect. lxxii., Migne, i., 1074.

[2] *De civitate Dei*, l. 22, cap. xxiv.

[3] It seems best to avoid the negative use of the term seen in such phrases as the progress of disease, of destruction, or of wickedness. Rather these are cases of retrogression in health, in wealth, in virtue.

[4] Reckoning appreciation or depreciation of gold or of silver and expressing it by "index numbers".

the price of any object expresses its value, and its value depends largely on its utility, and its utility varies with the man who uses it, and even to him is not the same if he is already provided with the same sort in abundance; it follows that we must first tell who has the use and enjoyment of a country's wealth, how it is shared among the inhabitants and used in each household, before we can reckon its amount.

But difficulties are either an incentive to overcome them, or a sign that we have strayed from the high road and taken a by-path. And these difficulties in making a monetary and mathematical calculation of the conditions of societies, are meant to show that we gain little or nothing by isolating wealth from other features of society, our attempted precision being baffled on our finding that the very wealth of which we have taken stock is being hourly transmuted by intellectual and moral forces. Hence, while it is needful to distinguish material civilisation from intellectual, and both kinds of civilisation from the conditions of morality and religion, this is to clear our abstract thought, not to sunder what in the concrete is inseparable. It is the real state of different societies, physical, intellectual and moral, that we need to know, not vague generalities but a detailed specification, in the double form of the lower statistics that can be expressed in figures and the higher statistics that transcend numeration.[1]

5. SCHEDULE FOR MAKING A SPECIFIC COMPARISON.

As a rough provisional specification of the items of inquiry or schedule of social comparison, let us, having before us a particular area and particular time, make our inquiry somewhat as follows: On the natural resources of the country, the climate, soil, rivers, mountains, and minerals, and the number and racial characteristics of the inhabitants; then on how they are making use of their patrimony, their agriculture, manufactures, mines, fisheries, shipping and commerce and means of communication; and how far in their use there has been waste, damage or destruction, in particular how far they have yielded to that peculiar form of human destructiveness, the wasting of the forests, whereby much of the globe in subtropical latitudes has been rendered a desert, and many of the fairest mountains and valleys irretrievably damaged. Again, we must assess the damage by the waste of sewage, by the pollution of the air with fumes and smoke, by the pollution of the rivers with all kinds of refuse, by the destruction of natural beauty. We must inquire also in each particular industry the character and surroundings of daily work, the organisation of industry, the leisure at the disposal of different classes. Then turning from the side of production to that of consumption we must take stock of the quantity and quality of the habitual food, clothing, dwellings, fuel and furniture of all classes of the people, the proportion of urban to rural population, the medical and surgical provision, the recreations of young and old, of high and low. We must further be told the conditions of ownership, the actual distribution of property, and the political organisation, especially under the four heads of the security of life and property, of the certainty, speed and cheapness of legal procedure, of the weight of taxation compared with taxable capacity, and fourthly of the vigour of efficiency of local government. Then we must scrutinise the conditions of culture whether confined to a few or spread among many, the provision of elementary, secondary and higher schools, and the fruits of such provision seen in the actual literature read, the music and fine art actually enjoyed, the habitual knowledge by the inhabitants of the history and natural history of their native land. Then, having examined the intellectual civilisation, we should pass on to the most difficult part, but also to the crown, of our inquiry, on which true happiness and popular welfare depend, namely, the moral and religious condition of the

[1] A presentation of these two kinds of statistics applied to different times and places, is the very foundation of history, and the tracing of causes the very essence of scientific history; yet so hard to reach that Prof. Ashley has declared history (he means the science of social facts sometimes called sociology) to be the most difficult of sciences (Preface to the translation of Fustel de Coulanges, *Origin of Property in Land*). This very difficulty removes another: how it is possible that such totally different pictures are presented to us of such countries and peoples open to our present observation, facts that seem to stare us in the face, such, *e.g.*, as the moral, intellectual and material conditions of the Russians or the Boers or the Germans. Only experts can profitably examine into concrete facts (as Mr. Rowntree at York); to convert the concrete into the abstract and to grasp the true issue of the facts, requires a considerable outfit of logic and philosophy.

people, their views of life and death, the habitual relation of husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, the supreme statistics of the proportion of homes within whose walls we can find a sanctuary of innocence and peace.[1]

6. BALANCE OF LOSS AND GAIN.

With such a schedule of comparison in their hands, or rather with one more elaborate and precise, each item duly marked with number or letter, the students of history, if equipped with sound first principles and sober judgment, might hope to make many profitable comparisons. And one of the first lessons to learn would be the complication of their task, the perplexing balance of advantage and disadvantage between different countries, the perplexing balance of loss and gain between different periods, so that frequently they would have to be content with the honest if modest conclusion that matters were in some aspects better and in others worse. Take, for example, the Egyptian statue of an officer of high rank about B.C. 1300, seated beside his wife or sister, to be seen in the Egyptian gallery of the British Museum; inquire from Egyptologists the probable history of that man, his means of income, his house and garden, his family and servants, his education, the art and literature at his disposal, his knowledge and practice of the moral law and religious teaching; compare him in all these matters with a Hindu gentleman of high birth and office at the court of some native state in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Here would be comparison of different places at different times.

Take again England (proper) and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany shortly before the middle of the nineteenth century: the industrial energy and commercial activity of the one state, the centre of a great empire and the world's commerce, vigorous in literature; and compare this with the political feebleness, commercial insignificance, and literary ineptitude of Tuscany; and also *per contra* how England's working population in field, mine, factory and ship (it was in the days before efficient Factory and Merchant Shipping Acts or efficient Trade Unions) were mostly sunk in material misery and often in moral degradation, whereas in Tuscany the mass of the people enjoyed material well-being and lived the idyllic life that any one can read in the famous chapter on metayers in Mill's *Political Economy*.

Here would be a comparison of different places at the same time.

Take again the district now called the county of London at the deaths of Edward I., George II., and Queen Victoria; at the second time of observation much greater than at the first in population, a far greater centre of commerce and industry; in material welfare the food, clothing and housing of the mass of its inhabitants and bodily health probably much the same or perhaps better; in beauty, though still a beautiful city in a beautiful framework, yet lacking the woods and hunting grounds of the earlier period; sadly fallen moreover from the Gothic glories of the great Edward; and fallen still lower in its morality, the processions of the multitudinous guilds, lay and religious, changed sadly into the scenes of street life depicted by Hogarth. Then the third point of observation shows a total contrast to the other two, the growth of numbers and wealth unparalleled and intoxicating; vigorous commerce and manufactures; an awe-inspiring imperial centre of world dominion; unparalleled improvement in public health; but *per contra* the beauty gone, the buildings blackened, the sky daily clouded with a curtain of smoke, the rich and poor districts sharply divided, and an appalling aggregate of overcrowding and poverty such as can be studied in the sober pages of Mr. Charles Booth's *Labour and Life in London*.

Here would be a comparison of the same place at different times.

7. APPARENT PARADOX ON PROGRESS.

In all these comparisons one thing is clear, the difficulty of making any accurate assessment of loss and gain; and if any readers would object, that whatever may be the comparisons between the ages and the places of the past, surely none can deny the marvellous advance in modern times and the great deeds of the nineteenth century, I would refer him again to the unfailing schedule of comparison and ask for particulars of place and time, and entreat him to be something better in his youth than a platform speaker on modern progress, to become

[1] Some of the foregoing is from the author's paper read in December, 1899, before the *Manchester Statistical Society*.

by reaction in his old age a *laudator temporis acti*.

If we keep to the material sphere only, we must indeed recognise to the full the wonderful increase of human power due to steam, electricity, mechanical invention, chemical discoveries, medical science during the last 150 years, and the marvellous increase in the numbers of the human race.

But, then, when all is said, the solid fact remains that those who enjoy a plenteous income are comparatively as few as before, and the mighty engines of advance seem to have laboured in vain.

Among the reasons for this paradox we may here name the four that follow:—

First, the very increase of numbers, without which the technical progress would have been impossible, is itself a cause which, if other things remained the same, would have made the conditions of life harder. But then precisely the very meaning of technical progress is that other things do not remain the same; and a general equilibrium is reached by these forces of population and progress acting on and neutralising each other.

Secondly, improved production is often accompanied by a reckless waste of material resources, such as injury to the soil by exhaustive agriculture, destruction of forests (for example, to supply railway sleepers in the United States and British India), exhaustion of coal and minerals, extermination of useful animals (for example, bisons and seals), destruction of river fish by the pollution of waters.

Thirdly, in place of former articles of general consumption the frequent introduction of new articles apparently cheap but in reality dear—inferior clothing, inferior furniture, inferior food and drink, produced no longer at home or locally and adapted to local consumption, but produced wholesale in concentrated factories and tending to perpetuate the mischief by damaging the capacities, because lessening the sphere, of the ancient housewife.

Fourthly, the very technical triumphs of the nineteenth century have made the means of communication cheap and easy, and have thereby removed the old difficulty of feeding large cities, but at the same time have thereby removed the main counterpoise to the attractive forces of town industry and town life; the very inventions thus becoming the prime occasion of one of the chief troubles of our times known as urban congestion. Low quarters and overcrowding and low life in great cities are indeed ancient evils; what is new is not so much the quality as the quantity of the mischief, the enormous proportion of national life now absorbed in town life, the extent rather than the acuteness of the "house famine," the tens of millions to whom the payment of "the rent" is the absorbing preoccupation, and for whom the manifold gifts of the good fairy Progress have been turned to ashes by the malign breath of her twin sister Urban Congestion.

Loss and gain are thus intermingled and entangled; it needs a skilful hand to disentangle them. The figures are in ever varying confusion and it needs more than a common actuary to frame a true balance sheet. Even if we use the mere calculus of pleasure and pain, it may be questioned whether in the passage from a rude to a civilised life, and from lesser to greater civilisation, the new joys brought to most men are not more than cancelled by the attendant sorrows. And if we use an intellectual calculus we have to face the fact that progress among the few may be balanced by retrogression among the many. So in Greece the heroic age, with comparative intellectual equality of man and man, gave place to a society differentiated into a cultured literary philosophical few (the καλοὶ κἀγαθοὶ), and on the other side a double group of uncultivated slaves and of free citizens, who, in the words of the German historian Professor Beloch, understood as little of the Greek poets "as our (German) people do of Schiller and Goethe".[1]

So in Romé the brilliant society made familiar to us by the letters of Cicero was bought at the price of a degraded mob of slaves and citizens, instead of the simple life of early Roman civilisation, when client and patron were linked by a religious bond, when no gulf separated the slaves from the masters, who were almost their equal in number, and when all partook of the songs, the dances, and the simple pleasures of rural life—a life of which the survival in the remote, half-deserted country villages still delighted the nobler hearts, or soothed the jaded votaries of pleasure, in the later times of civilisation.

So in England of to-day the culture of the cultivated is held very high, and far

[1] *Griechische Geschichte*, 1893, vol. i., chap. xvii.

above that of the mandarin in China. But if we take the lower four-fifths of the inhabitants and compare them with the lower four-fifths of the province of Shantung, about an equal population, the Chinese would appear to many the more intellectually civilised of the two. For the comparison would turn on the actual literature read, the manners and courtesies of daily life, the practical knowledge in the minds of the rural workmen and farmers, the prevalent amusements and particularly, as a mirror of life, the theatrical representations, the music hall entertainments or nightly festival of the western people compared with the historical drama still the delight of the eastern.[1]

So again on many sides we meet the sorrowing complaint that the poetry and beauty of rural life, the folklore and the peasant songs[2] of the British Isles and all Europe are perishing, like the old picturesque costumes and the old rural sports and pastimes, before an iron uniformity of town-made speech, town-made dress, and town-made manners.

8. THE MANIFOLD FACTS OF RETROGRESSION.

Moreover, the history of the world tells the tale of the fall of nations as well as their rise; and we must face the fact of retrogression as well as the fact of progress. The great ruins in Java, Cambodia, Mexico, Guatemala, Southern Arabia; the thousands of miles of stone wall terraces for irrigated agriculture on the Inyanga plateau of Southern Rhodesia; the sculptures in many islands of the Pacific—all are silent witnesses of former civilisations. The deciphered testimony of Babylonia and Egypt gives us in writing some of the evidence of the height of civilisation attained long ago and then lost in the valleys of the Euphrates, the Tigris and the Nile. Good judges hold that Egyptian art, whatever may have been the race of the artists, reached its perfection about B.C. 4000, and fresh discoveries are ever exciting our fresh admiration; while a diligent search into the antiquities of Greece and Italy, and the excavations in Troas and Crete have made known unexpected civilisation, previous to the time we have been accustomed to call classical. Even to this day we cannot recover the Roman cement or the range of musical expression attained by the Greeks. And modern savages join with ancient monuments in giving their testimony to the fact of retrogression; some visibly declining before our eyes, others, notably the Fuegians, the Hottentots, the Esquimaux and the black Australians, proving by their elaborate language an anterior cultivated condition from which they have fallen.

We learn indeed nothing positive on the condition of primitive man from the evidence of retrogression, and here as elsewhere must take heed lest we outrun our information. The Greeks and Romans played with the theory of an original degraded and brutal condition of mankind; it was not till the nineteenth century that this theory was assumed as a scientific postulate to support a biological theory, and by a strange disregard of historical logic, existing savages, the lowest and the worst, though chronologically as modern as civilised races, were assumed to be scientifically ancient, and to be the nearest representatives of primitive humanity. But this assumption fails in three ways. First, because the proved fact of retrogression destroys any certainty that a given state of degradation is the original, and not rather a fallen state. Secondly, because the evidence as far as ascertainable on the earliest known men, shows them in their material and moral outfit to be above the level of the lowest existing savages. Thirdly, because the low moral state, supposed or postulated, of primitive men, must have rendered their mere survival hardly possible, still less any advance.

Instead, therefore, of so faulty an assumption the more reasonable guess would be that men started with some stock of material advantages, and resembled in moral dispositions the better among modern savages, like the Eastern Esquimaux, the Veddahs of Ceylon, the

[1] The love of the theatre permeates all classes of Chinese. The poor are admitted free to the pit; the plays almost entirely represent events of Chinese history, previous to those under the present reigning dynasty, and give an accurate and life-like representation. Like our own stage in Shakespeare's time the female parts are taken by boys and there is no scenery; but the skill of the actors overcomes all deficiencies and holds the audience as if bewitched. See the works of Davis, Gray, H. E. M. James, Wells, Williams, and Archibald Little.

[2] Ere they die away efforts have been made to preserve their memory in such works as Ruskin's edition of Miss Alexander's *Road-Side Songs in Tuscany*, or Mr. G. W. White's *Songs of the Spanish Sierras*, or Mr. Douglas Hyde's *Love Songs of Connaught*.

natives of the Banda Archipelago, the modest and hospitable Ainos of Japan, or some of the American Indians or Central African negroes, those namely who have been uncontaminated by European or Arab intruders.[1]

But this, after all, scientifically, is mere guess-work, and as far as historical evidence goes, human evolution has no appearance of a great process of advance, but of oscillation between progress and retrogression, which may exist simultaneously in the self-same society. Material civilisation may be advancing while art and morality are declining; within the very domain of morality "progress in benevolence may co-exist with regress in fortitude and purity. . . . And in every realm, growth and decay, life and death, seem so to intertwine and oscillate, that it is very gratuitous to designate the total process as being one or the other."[2]

Indeed the very progress of knowledge and the cultivation of reason which at first act in favour of material civilisation, seem to hold the germs of decay: all institutions being exposed to argumentative reason, the belief in any sacredness fades away, national traditions grow feeble, loyalty and patriotism give place to self-interest, a great empire becomes no more than a valuable commercial asset, heroic self-sacrifice in its defence, especially among those to whom it brings no palpable gain, appears foolishness, and civil dissension, the *στάσις* of the Greeks, no longer able to be averted by any compromise, material civilisation becomes its own executioner.

The whence and the whither, the origin and issue of man's course, remain unexplained; all things appear in a Heracleitan flux, all knowledge in confusion and uncertainty, and all explanations, one only being excepted, to end in disillusion.

9. PANTHEISM, MATERIALISM AND THEISM AS SOLUTIONS OF THE WORLD PROBLEM.

Apart from views that are partial and halting there remain three coherent systems that have striven from time immemorial to give a consistent theory of the world; and the three are pantheism, materialism, and theism. Either we ourselves and all around us are merely the manifestation of one and the same substance, one original force that thinks in a man, seizes its prey in a wild beast, unfolds bud and leaf in an oak, darts through the clouds in lightning, strikes the cliffs in a storm-wave; or secondly, we ourselves and all around us, earth and all the stars, are due to chance, the product of whirling atoms, how arisen, how ending, known to none; or thirdly, all has arisen from the fiat of an intelligent Creator, and all exists in consequence with a definite purpose.

These are the three, and among them we have ultimately to make our choice; for to be rid of them all by professing permanent uncertainty is to rest in agnosticism and to abandon the pursuit of truth.[3] The three systems indeed are not to be put on a level, not simply co-ordinated, but rather the first two to be bracketed against the third. For the first two uphold a monistic conception of the universe, that is, they reduce All to One, though pantheism would make all spiritual and materialism make all material; whereas theism recognises the dualism of matter and spirit. And while pantheism and materialism agree in rejecting the reality of a personal God creating and directing the universe, Himself being distinct from it, theism emphatically affirms this reality as a fundamental truth, without which no science physical or historical can have a sure foundation.

Thus the solutions of the riddle of the universe seem to be simplified into two, the theistic and antitheistic, in irreconcilable opposition, whereas pantheism and

[1] See the evidence collected by Dr. G. Gutberlet, *Der Mensch*, 2nd edit., 1903; and by Victor Cathrein, *Moralphilosophie*, 4th edit., 1904, vol. i., pp. 571-618; ii., pp. 384-91.

[2] Compare the passage in Newman's *Development*, chap. v., § vi.: "There is ever a maximum in earthly excellence, and the operation of the same causes which made things great, makes them small again. Weakness is but the resulting product of power. Events move in cycles; all things come round, the sun ariseth and goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. Flowers first bloom and then fade; fruit ripens and decays. The fermenting process unless stopped at the due point corrupts the liquor which it has created. The grace of spring, the richness of autumn are but for a moment, and worldly moralists bid us *Carpe diem*, for we shall have no second opportunity."

[3] The divergence of view and confusion of terminology among modern philosophers of English and German speech may seem to complicate the issue and give plausibility to the existence of some *quartum quid*, that cannot be resolved into materialism, pantheism, or theism. But time is the test; and when these soft deposits of modern thoughts are hardened by pressure, their character as one or other of the three varieties will be made manifest.

materialism appear rather as provinces of one empire, or aspects of one view, and the passage from the one to the other easy and frequent as the poetical or the practical sentiment is predominant. So, for example, it was easy for Karl Marx to pass from Hegelian pantheism to Feuerbach's materialism, and to unfold the history of mankind as an evolution corresponding to the Darwinian interpretation of organic nature, and wholly based on the varying conditions of acquiring and sharing wealth.

The present work is explanatory rather than controversial, and makes no profession of confuting pantheistic or materialistic writers or those who hover uncertain on the borders. Much rather the theistic position, which is that of the vast majority of historical mankind, is taken as a postulate without which, in the words of M. Brunetière,[1] "history becomes a chaos, a disorderly succession of meaningless movements, an empty and tumultuous agitation, a fleeting delusion, the Maya of Indian philosophers, the dream we carry on without knowing when it was begun, nor whether we shall finish it, nor why we are dreaming it. But in the light of the supernatural everything grows clear; the life of our species is vested with a meaning, the history of mankind becomes organised; we develop ourselves in the indifference or hostility of nature, like an empire within an empire, under a law partaking of the divinity of its author."

Thus we may sum up in M. Brunetière's aphorism: "The hypothesis of Providence is the condition of intelligible history".

10. DIFFICULTIES OF THEISM.

But those would be sadly deceived who thought that the postulate of theism at once made all things easy.

The opposing theories would never again and again have acquired adherents so numerous and so great, and would not have become the chronic maladies of the human mind, were it not that the path of theism is strewn with boulders. To remove some of them from the highway of truth is the purpose of this work, a task made easier by recent science physical and historical.

If we looked indeed on the surface of things, the notion of order in history and the guidance of man's course by Divine Providence seem contradicted by facts. "To consider the world in its length and breadth, its various history, the many races of man, their starts, their fortunes, their mutual alienation, their conflicts; and then their ways, habits, governments, forms of worship; their enterprises, their aimless courses, their random achievements and acquirements, the impotent conclusion of long-standing facts, the tokens so faint and broken of a superintending design, the blind evolution of what turn out to be great powers or truths, the progress of things, as if from unreasoning elements, not towards final causes, the greatness and littleness of man, his far-reaching aims, his short duration, the curtain hung over his futurity, the disappointments of life, the defeat of good, the success of evil, physical pain, mental anguish, the prevalence and intensity of sin, the pervading idolatries, the corruptions, the dreary hopeless irreligion, . . . all this is a vision to dizzy and appal, and inflicts upon the mind a sense of profound mystery, which is absolutely beyond human solution."[2]

But the negative solution of him who hath said in his heart, There is no God, only issues in a second problem more difficult than the first. We cannot raise the question: How can there be evil if God exists? without raising the second, How can there be good if He exist not?[3]

If our hearts are frozen at the sight of evil, let them be enkindled at the sight of good. And to see good we must do more than look on the surface of things, for truth is not on the surface of things but in the depths. Nay, virtue and sanctity are in great measure secret gifts known only to God and good angels. The evil of the world is not seeming in its existence but seeming in its predominance. Our picture of the world is often like a geological map that shows by its colours the uppermost rock though only a shallow layer on the surface and without showing the rock below though of ten times the thickness. For evil is uppermost, but everywhere underlined by good. We observe all startling acts of wickedness, but the daily round of ordinary goodness passes unobserved; we hear the drunken clamour of the streets, but not the silent worshippers in the watches of the night;

[1] Translated in *The Pilot*, 21st May, 1904.

[2] Newman, *Apologia*, chap. v., *ad init.*

[3] Boethius, *Consol. Phil.*, i., iv.: "Quidam familiarium quaesivit: si quidem Deus, inquit, est, unde mala? bona vero unde, si non est?"

we hear the loud iniquity of the prime of life, not the silent change in sickness and old age; we see the ill deeds all too plainly, but the excuses for ill deeds, the confusion of mind, the stress of temptation, these are mostly hidden; we see the rough exterior, the coarse violence, the brutal ungodliness of whole quarters of our great cities, not the compassion and generosity, not the courage and chivalry, not the instinct of prayer concealed all the while below the surface. Do we not find out daily, if we search, how harshness in these dark regions avails nothing, while sympathy wins the heart? There must be a heart then to win. The very graceless youths, for whom many can offer no better remedy than the scourge and the prison-house, can be made docile as children by kindness and sympathy. Truly all men are better than they seem and their actions often worse than their hearts. Even the squalid tenements of English cities are daily witnesses of mutual help and unfailing charity. And if in the darker places of the world we can discover so many flowers of goodness, still more in the lighter, and can count up the beautiful aggregate of the acts of human love, filial and parental, fraternal and conjugal, and the ever freshly springing stream of childhood and innocence. Nor are the physicians of our bodies and our goods to be heard as judges: rather as *ex parte* witnesses whose main business is with the abnormal conditions of disease and injustice. A better judgment is by the physicians of our souls who look on both sides, the good and the evil; who see how evil is made the occasion of good, as it were its counterpart and correlative; who read the unwritten record of unexhausted patience, of continuous self-sacrifice, of repentant tears; to whom ill doers are transmuted into the material for the triumph of grace, and appear the yet ungarnered harvest of the Passion and the Cross.[1]

11. CHRISTIANITY'S CLAIM TO SOLVE THE DIFFICULTIES OF THEISM.

Taking the word antinomy to mean a seeming and soluble as distinct from a real and insoluble contradiction, and holding fast to the truth of the theistic explanation of the world, we are plainly confronted with a great antinomy, a thesis and antithesis to be harmonised in a synthesis.

[1] See Faber's works, especially *The Creator and the Creature*, bk. iii., chap. ii.

To do this is the claim of Christianity, the mighty claim to solve, and to stand alone in solving, the riddle of the universe. The claim is to satisfy the craving of the soul for love that is more than the transient love which earth can offer, for an ideal that is not finite but infinite, for goodness, truth and beauty are not relative but absolute; all else proving vanity and illusion. It is a claim to be alone in correspondence with man's spiritual life, and in man's actual condition to be the only true theism according to the old saying that man's soul was Christian by nature (*anima naturaliter Christiana*). For apart from Christianity mere theism, if it teach the infinitude of the Creator and the nothingness of the creature, fails to bridge the gulf between the finite and the infinite and satisfy man's yearning for companionship with God. All it can do is to lower God to man's level. But the Christian doctrine of Grace and Adoption leaves Divine Majesty intact and yet raises men up to be called and to be the children of God; and this supernatural elevation results in the blending of an awestruck reverence with familiar tenderness, in that lowly confidence and daring love, the peculiar signet of Christian sanctity. Indeed, Christianity tells us we are so completely made for God that we are not fully ourselves except when we are united to Him; that "the soul, apart from God, is as meaningless, as useless as a stray key".

And the Christian claim is to give a plain and simple answer to the perpetual questioning of weariness, pain and sorrow, to solve the problem they offer to the intellect, to show their true significance, and to be the Divine messenger that brings an effectual consolation.

And there is the claim externally to have transformed the world by introducing so to speak a new dynamic principle rendering stagnation impossible, not a preservative indeed against catastrophes to particular civilisations, but a provider of a principle of recovery; a transformation of economic and political life, of language, literature, art, philosophy and (at least in potentiality) of the sciences, thus becoming the very keystone of civilisation, so that the Incarnation may be held the turning point or centre of human history.

It claims to have introduced a circle of moral notions peculiar to itself, "the strength of weakness, the triumph of defeat, the blessing of sorrow, the might of pain, the power of concealment, the glory

of submission".[1] It has an answer which will give a meaning to pain and temptation and sin and sorrow, which will point to law and order where otherwise there is nothing apparent but painful darkness and confusion, which will verify and connect what is to all seeming manifold and disconnected, so that darkness is touched with joy and the needs of the human soul at last are satisfied.

And while other teachers have vainly striven to acquire a comprehensive history of the world as a whole, some intelligible survey of humanity, Christianity claims to have entered into possession, to have appeared as man's redemption at a definite historical time, to stretch forward through all time to the end, to stretch backwards in preparation through all time to the beginning, to rest secure on the timeless and the infinite.[2]

And thus as the explanation of all things, as Alpha and Omega, the Christian Church declares itself to be, not one religion among many, but the one religion for all places and all times; her view of life not to be one view among many, but the one and only view, to be the judge of all and be judged by none, the higher being able to comprehend the lower but not the lower to comprehend the higher; she claims alone to be the fitting vessel of supernatural gifts; to have gathered up all the scattered fragments of true religion in the pagan world, to have combined in harmonious proportions the three constituent elements of true religion; namely, a holy law, a mystical union, an intellectual doctrine.

At last therefore the freedom of man was reconciled with the sovereignty of God and the order of the universe; at last the gulf between unity and plurality, singleness and multiplicity, was bridged over; at last the yearning of man's heart was satisfied for a God at once transcendent and yet immanent; at once adorable and yet lovable. This is a mighty claim indeed: that Christianity was the culmination of all that went before intellectually and morally, and a foundation of a new intellectual and moral life on a higher plane.

[1] Faber, *Blessed Sacrament*, bk. iv., sect. iii.

[2] Otto Willmann, *Geschichte des Idealismus*, vol. ii., p. 9. The theological view of the history of Creation was put by Faber (following Lessius) with singular attractiveness fifty years ago in *The Creator and the Creature*, especially in book iii., chap. ix.

12. DISTINCTION OF FORE-CHRISTIANS, JEWS, CHRISTIANS AND AFTER-CHRISTIANS.

Although at this stage we can make no valid induction, still a certain presumption and preliminary justification of these great claims can be found in the course of the world's history since the advent of Christianity. Certain portions of the world were converted to the new creed and there arose by degrees, and has ever after with varying fortunes continued, a Christendom. But great portions of the world, many races and nations have to this day never been effectually penetrated by Christian influence, and thus lasting with no breach of continuity between themselves and their ancestors before Christ, may be called *Fore-Christians*. A third distinct body of men are those whose fathers or forefathers or it may be themselves, have passed through Christian influence, and rejected it for something that seemed to them better, an improved or complete religion, or a truer philosophy of life. They may be called *After-Christians*, and are composed of two principal groups, the Mahometans who have supplanted the Christians in vast regions of Africa and the East, and secondly a group with various names who have spread in less than a century and a half through parts of Europe, North America and Australasia, nowhere wholly dominant, but in most of France and Australasia, in much of the North American Union, and in parts of England and Germany, sufficiently powerful to be a serious influence on social life. There still remains a fourth body of men, the Jews, who occupy a position apart, neither Fore-Christian nor After-Christian, but standing to Christianity in a singular relation.

Now, beginning with this fourth body of men, their history presents a singularity that must be explained by any philosophy of history, any theory of sociology, that deserves the name. Through nearly nineteen centuries they appear apart and hostile to the rest of mankind; always feared, often hated as usurious parasites, often persecuted, yet ever surviving, never assimilated, as if masters of some hidden power, sometimes conspicuous for great works of benevolence, rising ever and anon to be great physicians (as in the ninth and twelfth and fourteenth centuries) and great financiers (as under Louis le Débonnaire or in Angevin England or in the sixteenth century Papal States, or in Europe of the nineteenth

century), sometimes shut up in ghettos to protect them from popular violence, sometimes forming ghettos of their own (as in London of to-day), conspicuous for mutual help and yet for making pitiless profit from the distress and ignorance of their fellow-men, themselves appearing in many things exempt from the weaknesses of ordinary men.

Their singular history supports the Christian claims, because Christianity alone gives an intelligible explanation—it can be read in the last chapter of the *Grammar of Assent*—and raises a presumption in its favour, at least till some other teacher can give to the cumulative marvels of this history an equally intelligible interpretation.

13. THE AFTER-CHRISTIAN MOSLEMS.

The presumption in favour of Christian claims is strengthened if we glance at the fortunes of the Fore-Christians and the After-Christians. Let the last be taken first, and the first among them the Mahometans. From being no more than a cloud on the horizon the religion of Mahomet in a few years overspread the East, swept half the existing Roman empire into its power, overthrew the Zoroastrian kingdom of the Sassanians in Persia, and the Christian Teutonic kingdom of Spain; and seemed to call up a civilisation with agriculture and manufactures, literature and philosophy, science and architecture, that threw the Christian world into the shade. Nay, while the world was full of hereditary inequalities of wealth and power, Islam at one bound seemed to leap over centuries, and to secure the equality which is the aim of modern socialists; if the sexes were separate, at least the men among themselves, and the women among themselves, each formed a frankly democratic society, all classes mingling in free equality, the lowest able to rise to the highest temporal post, worth not birth being taken as the test, and the sphere of friendship and social intercourse being enlarged, because the spectre of *mésalliance* was exorcised. Moreover, the simple monotheism, the plenteous almsgiving, the decorous public worship, join in giving to the religion of Mahomet the semblance of advance.

But *exitus acta probat:* wait for the grey evening of that brilliant day. Or rather there is no need to wait, but to look closer, that we may discover the true aspect of this mighty creed.

The seeming progress of intellectual and material civilisation in the ex-Christian countries was all in the earlier and not in the latter half of their history, and is judged by good observers to have been mainly the work not of the After-Christians themselves, but of the Christians, or Jews, or Persians under their dominion, or at least the early generations of converts to the new creed. The glory of the eastern Caliphate, Ommiad and Abbasid, has the name of Arab culture, and used Arabic as its vehicle; but in reality was the continuation of the Greek, the Syrian, and the Persian culture which preceded it, a culture of which the greatness is still imperfectly appreciated among us, like that in the seventh century of the two great empires of Persia and Byzantium.[1] The fairy parts of the *Arabian Nights* are not of Arabian but of Persian or Indian origin. Neither the beautiful architecture of the eastern Caliphate nor the deep philosophy were Islam's own, but were drawn from feeding on others, were parasitic and therefore transitory. So too the Moorish culture (as it is called) in Spain was parasitic. The Arab literature of Spain has made no permanent addition to the intellectual possessions of mankind; Averroes, the most eminent among them, was in no sense a product of Islam, and the intellectual bloom was the work of those Christians and Jews who for the sake of preserving their property had apostatised. Thus being without root the culture withered away when there was no longer any great body of Christians or lapsed Christians to be its support; witness the rapid decay after the thirteenth century. Indeed at the end of the fourteenth century Ibn Khaldun tells how in Arabia, Syria, Persia and North Africa civilisation and population had fallen, and the very land seemed to have lost its fertility under the blighting rule of his fellow-Arabs.[2]

In this there is nothing strange; for the Mahometan religion itself brings no new principle of progress into the world, but much rather stereotypes a low form of civilisation, and is not by accident but by essence the opponent of all higher culture. So even supposing it raised the pagan pre-Moslem Arabs, a very dubious

[1] See the manual by Prof. Pizzi, the Orientalist, of Turin, *L'Islamismo*, Milano, 1903.

[2] See the instructive extract translated in Dr. Flint's *Philosophy of History*, 1893, pp. 166, 167.

elevation, if we regard the old chivalrous heroic literature of the "Ignorance," as Moslems call the time,[1] the new religion effectually blocked any prospect of a great future civilisation.

For Islam in very truth is a foe to the human race. The uncompromising Unitarianism puts a gulf between God and man; the theology, a narrow Calvinism, inhumane and unprogressive, is the death warrant of culture; the sacred Koran was a substitute for all literature and science, was the fount of jurisprudence,[2] the base of a militant theocracy, that showed its fruits when Omar, a few years after the conquest of Egypt, burnt the Alexandrian library,[3] as the libraries of Ctesiphon and Seleucia had been burnt before, and showed the same fruits again in East and West, when philosophy was found incompatible with Mahometan theology and was repressed, first in the East, and finally during the thirteenth century in the West.[4] This theology displays a narrow formalism; the five principal duties binding on all, ablution, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and almsgiving (as a means of supporting the holy war against infidels), these constitute a mere external religion, and imply no change of heart, no sorrow for sin, far less any loving union with God. Much rather this man-made creed fosters spiritual pride and ruthless persecution. Non-Moslems are despised as infidel dogs, practically without rights, mere outlaws, with the sword of massacre ever suspended over their heads.

This awful logic of the Moslem creed was developed by degrees, and the condition of the Christian subjects, from the early days of humanity and toleration in Syria, Egypt, North Africa and Spain, grew progressively worse. Solemn promises were broken, the churches seized or destroyed, and the Christians ground down under a ferocious despotism.[5] And in our own time some of us remember the massacres of the Maronites, of the Armenians, of the Bulgarians, or have heard our fathers tell of fair Scio with her harvest of death. Nor can we expect otherwise of a smouldering fire but that from time to time it will burst out into blood-red flame.

Further, the jurisprudence of Islam is at once a witness and a promoter of lax family life. The complicated rules of succession to property, the complete assimilation of realty and personalty, the separate property of married women, all are adapted for transient families, habitual polygamy, habitual divorce; and effectually hinder in general any stock of honourable family traditions, any careful guarding of genealogies, any solid peasantry rooted to the soil. A careful comparison of the details of family life would place the After-Christian Mahometans immeasurably below the Fore-Christian Chinese.[6]

Indeed the pleasant equality among Mahometan men is bought at the price of woman's degradation. Held inferior in intelligence, inferior in virtue, inferior in religion, brought up as far as possible in seclusion, and trained to be led by the two principal motives of fear and sensuality, women form a world apart, are no companions for their husbands, can invoke no religious sanction to support his constancy or affection, are as drudges among the poor, as courtesans among the rich. Plurality of wives, plurality of concubines, the legal recognition of the status of slave concubine, are in startling contrast to the austerity of Christian teaching. But even the lax code of Islam is not wide enough for the insatiable cravings of licentiousness; the standard, low as it is, remains too high; and the realm of these After-Christians is covered with a slimy deposit of moral corruption.

Yet even here let us beware of exaggeration. For first, the power of good breaks out amid the worst surroundings; and in the midst of Islam we may find sincere attachment between husband and wife though the wife has lost her beauty and lacks, both herself and her relatives, any wealth or power. And secondly, while the rich Moslems and the townsfolk tend to self-destruction, the case is not the same with poor husbandmen, rural life often being a purificator, and giving less

[1] See W. P. Ker, *The Dark Ages*, 1904, p. 14; Baumgartner in *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*, Aug. and Sept., 1894 (giving many illustrations); Lane Poole in *The Academy*, 2nd Feb., 1878 (resuming A. von Kremer).

[2] On the identification in Islam of law with religion see Sir James Bryce, *Studies in History and Jurisprudence*, Essay xiii.

[3] The needed correction of Gibbon is given in *The Quarterly Review*, July, 1895.

[4] Previously attempts had been made, notably by the Brothers of Sincerity in Mesopotamia about the year 1000, to affect a pantheistic transmutation of the Koran. See *The International Journal of Ethics*, July, 1898.

[5] Dozy, *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne*, ii., pp. 48-50.

[6] This and other comparisons can be found in the author's *Studies of Family Life*, 1886.

scope for the moral degradation of women. And thirdly, the dark picture above applies only to where Islam is fully developed and can work out its true nature as the supplanter of Christendom; but not to its merely nominal adherents like the Bedouins of the Arabian desert, the Turcomans or Kurds of Eastern Asia Minor, the Berber tribes of the Sahara, and perhaps only in a lesser degree to the Indian and negro Mahometans, to Delhi and Timbuctoo: for it is not there that Christianity has been weighed and found wanting.

14. THE AFTER-CHRISTIANS OF FRANCE.

The second group of After-Christians afford on a superficial view a startling contrast to the first, but on a closer view a startling likeness. They began in France in the eighteenth century, the second example, Islam being the first, of a large body of men, as distinct from the sporadic and chronic secession of individuals, embracing a new doctrine to supersede Christianity. Voltaire and Rousseau were the most influential heralds of this new revolt against Christianity, and France having been under their influence for more than a hundred years, is the most conspicuous example of After-Christianity. But other countries have followed, the north-easterly and more settled portion of the United States from about the middle of the nineteenth century, and spreading with the spread of the elementary, gratuitous, and non-religious schools they call "public," long and blindly worshipped, and now calling forth the humiliating avowal: We cannot teach duty or the spirit of obedience.[1] In England the Christian forces have been stronger, but still in England (as distinct from Wales, Scotland and Ireland) large masses both urban and rural have abandoned Christianity. In the German Empire their numbers and localities can be roughly judged by the number of the Social Democrats; in Australia, New Zealand, and the Canadian province of Ontario they are certainly numerous, but their proportion to the Christians is guesswork.

These cases present the greatest variety of race, of government, of economic surroundings. And the actual doctrines of life professed by the leaders of this movement are also various. They may be theistic (like the other great branch of After-Christians), or pantheistic, or materialistic, or halt on temporary standpoints between these three main positions.

What is common to them is negative, the rejection of the Christian view of the end of life, of the Christian view of man's nature, of the Christian view of the sanctity of marriage and the training of the young.[2] In these negations they resemble the Moslems; and they are like them in being essentially parasitic, and destructive of the very civilisation they seem to foster: the early enthusiasm ends in bitter disillusion; they only differ in the process being much more rapid than with their earlier brethren. France offers as yet the most complete specimen for observation: the brilliant outburst of emancipated humanity, her tongue, her influence, and later her arms dominating all Europe, admired or dreaded, and then the steady ebb of that glory, as the accumulated waters of Christianity gradually flowed away. To sink from being in the first place politically to the seventh or lower is a comparatively small matter, and may be due to other causes; the loss of literary and intellectual eminence is graver; but the main point is the loss of moral influence and to be a labelled specimen of decadence: here the After-Christian appears in his development; he treats as illusion all belief in God, as illusion all devotion to prince or people, as illusion all eternal and spiritual human love, as illusion his own free will and undying personality. So all that gave life its value and dignity is abandoned, and all that remains are the calculated pleasures of the cynic who resolves to be a dupe no more.

One visible and outward sign of the changed condition of France is the record of vital statistics. Slowly, steadily the birth-rate of France has sunk lower and lower till the population has reached a stationary state, and long ago would actually have declined were it not that certain portions remain Christian and the surplus of births, *e.g.*, in Auvergne and Brittany, supply the deficiency in Normandy and Picardy, and is masked by the immigration of Flemings and Italians. And here again is a resemblance to the

[1] See for recent witnesses G. Stanley Hall's *Adolescence*, and W. E. Chancellor's *American Schools*, reviewed in *The Times*, 31st March, 1905.

[2] An account of many leading After-Christians is to be found in the brilliant pages of Dr. Barry's *Heralds of Revolt*, 1904.

depopulation of Islam; here again the After-Christians appear as parasites fed by others; and the importation of Circassian and negro slaves into Moslem countries, the former raids of Barbary pirates, and the transformation of kidnapped Christian children into Turkish janissaries, are analogous to the foreign immigration into France and the absorption of the Highlanders into After-Christian populations.

15. OTHER EXAMPLES.

Analogous facts are to be observed among the Americans. Their public schools have produced a type that tends to self-destruction; the high birth-rate of olden times, the "American increase" that so startled Malthus a century ago, has decayed *pari passu* with the decay of religion, and now the native American is in process of disappearance; in the case of Massachusetts where elaborate statistics are kept the very figures can be given;[1] and this sterility is openly deplored by the President of the Republic.[2] The population of the United States advances indeed by leaps and bounds, but is not composed of the descendants of the older settlers, much rather by the multitudinous new-comers from the Christian parts of Europe, many of these emigrants soon to be caught in the After-Christian whirlpool and to be taught and practise the new ways of life and the new morals of divorce and sterility. Similarly in Australia and New Zealand in the bloom of their first After-Christian efflorescence the blight of a decaying birth-rate has darkened with startling suddenness their brilliant prospects. Again, the Germans as far as After-Christian are beginning to show symptoms of an inward malady. Their superb literature (now seemingly of the past), their patient science, their supreme music, were the heritage of centuries of Christianity; no less than their solid family life and their traditions of industry. Like the French before them their exploits were wonderful and the world admired and still admires; but already they suffer from a persistent and organised force of social disorder; and if as yet the population has advanced apace, and the excess of births over deaths amounted in the thirty years following their victorious war to some eighteen million souls, while in France it amounted to little over one million,[3] all analogy points to a speedy diminution of the German birth-rate; nay, already it has sunk low in Berlin, the centre of After-Christian thought; while for the empire as a whole, the birth-rate in the large and numerous Christian regions masks the earlier stages of the After-Christian decline. And in England, the same tell-tale witness of vital statistics shows during the last twenty-five years a steady decline in the birth-rate; and this fact, as well as the serious increase of divorce, the growth of life in hotels and flats, the open abandonment of Christian family life among sections of the higher, the middle and the artisan classes, all show a visible approximation to the conditions of France. It is not then surprising if grave writers warn us of the perils of a materialised civilisation, of spiritual atrophy, of the vices of popular government that no manipulation can amend, but only regeneration; and that though we may see the spectre drawing near, we may be unable to arrest our inevitable decline.[4] Truly inevitable! but only if we will not hear the one Healer of the nations.

Further details of After-Christianity, though available, are here unnecessary, where we are only seeking a preliminary presumption in favour of the Christian claims. It is enough that the examples before us seem to point to a probable conclusion, namely, that Christianity is final, that it provides the highest type of family life (on which all society rests), and that those who desert Christianity are cut off from the possibility of reverting to the higher types of Fore-Christian families (like the solid family of modern inner China, of regal Rome, of Homeric Greece, of the Egyptians of the Great Pyramids), and find themselves driven back to lower forms, and threatened with the worst abominations of outcast and degraded races. But then, inasmuch as family life is the main foundation of civilisation and of happiness; and no substitute is available for the love between husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister; nor device yet discovered for man's moral outfit, that can compare in efficacy with be-

[1] *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. xvi., Nov., 1901, Feb., 1902.

[2] *North American Review*, July, 1903.

[3] Naturally allowance being made for the alteration of territory; and Alsace-Lorraine being eliminated from the comparison.

[4] *The Times*, 13th Jan., 1905, in the reviews of Dr. Dill's *Roman Society* and of Mr. Hobhouse's *Democracy and Reaction*.

ing brought up in a devout and honourable home, it follows that After-Christians of all kinds, in attacking the Christian family, by the very attack stand condemned.[1]

16. THE FORE-CHRISTIANS.

On the Fore-Christians who have lived since the advent of Christianity little need here be said—little, though the greater part of mankind through 1900 years is included—little, though their fortunes show almost infinite variety, and the tale would tell of the rise and fall of whole literatures and civilisations—little, because they can all be embraced in the negative generalisation, that apart from Christians and After-Christians and taken as a world by themselves, no general law is to be found for them, no steadfast evolution, no philosophy of history, no scientific explanation of their vicissitudes. How was it, for example, that the civilisation in Persia was so brilliant in the sixth century, and of Vijayanagar (Southern India) in the fifteenth and sixteenth, and the Jaina temples of Dilwarra (South Rajputana) of the twelfth century so indescribably beautiful? How account for the languages and culture of the Hausas of Central Africa before they were conquered by the Felah Arabs?—for the high position of women, and the art and industry, among the Scandinavian Vikings?—for the persistent civilisation of the Chinese and their golden age of poetry in the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries?—for the arts of the mid-nineteenth century Japanese?—for the grim civilisation of the Mexicans and the ordered socialism of the Peruvians as found by the Spaniards?—for the marvellous empire of the Tartars when our early Edwards were reigning?

All seems chaos till we grasp the principle by which the very vicissitudes can be made orderly and take their place in the circular movement of Fore-Christian history. The Incarnation is for all time, and in the historical as distinct from the theological sense, for them the Incarnation is not yet come. No one can reprove them (it is of nations, tongues and tribes I am speaking, not of individuals) with having cast aside Christianity. If hitherto their civilisation has never been able to overpass a certain level, if their best hope has been to retain that level and not roll backwards down the slope, still they have the prospect of Christianity in front of them and all the potentialities of advance; they are not doomed to degradation and decay; if they have already been degraded they can be raised again even if standing so low as the very savages of Western Australia—witness the work of the Benedictines at New Norcia; and to the Christian vision they stretch over the globe as fields white for harvest.

How far great portions of Islam may be reckoned among them has been briefly indicated, nor will I presume to judge further. But this seems likely, that Fore-Christians, when Christianity is manifestly put before them and they come as it were to the knowledge of good and evil (perhaps the Japanese are a good example, not indeed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but now in the twentieth), have before them a solemn alternative, it being no longer possible as a third choice to remain morally, as they were, in a state of unstable equilibrium. Two courses, and two alone, are open to them; and within no great period of time they must needs follow the one or the other, must take their stand with the Christians or the After-Christians, and for good or for evil abide the consequences.[2]

[1] So the theory of Dr. Francis Galton, renewed by the American Professor Ross, "on the all-importance of the best breed," and how every institution is to stand or fall by the breed of human beings it favours (*Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vols. xvi. and xvii.), though sadly astray on the facts of history, still points unwittingly to the all-importance of Christian family life.

[2] The world's religions and their numbers may be given from the careful studies of Fr. Krose in the *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*, July and August, 1903.

Christians of all sorts are reckoned at 549 millions (mainly under the heads of Catholics 264, Protestants 166, and Greek Orthodox 109). The rest are as follows:—

	Millions.
Confucians and Ancestor Worshippers	235
Brahmans (Hindus)	210
Mahometans of all kinds	202
Fetish Worshippers and other Pagans	144
Buddhists	130
Taoists (of China)	32
Shintoists (of Japan)	17
Old Indian worships	12
Jews	11
Sundry	2

In this catalogue the After-Christians have no rubric to themselves, and are to be extracted almost wholly from the three headings of Catholics, Protestants and Mahometans, and among these three, chiefly from those who speak French, English, German, Arabic or Turkish. To give any figures of their actual numbers would be mere guesswork.

The figure on Buddhism corresponds with the

17. CLAIM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TO SOLVE THE DIFFICULTIES OF CHRISTIANITY.

If we have raised a presumption in favour of Christian claims, still a presumption can be rebutted; and just as theism has grave difficulties which in fact can only be met by Christianity as complete theism, so Christianity itself has grave difficulties which can only be met by the Church as complete Christianity, the Church to which in the Creed we make our profession of loyalty: *Credo in Sanctam Ecclesiam Catholicam.* If we are to have the explanation of world-history we must first have the true theory—rationale—idea—of the Christian Church and her life through eighteen centuries. This is the master key to open a hundred closed doors; this is *Kirchengeschichte als Weltgeschichte*, the world record made intelligible by the Church record; this the indispensable and flexible instrument of research, bringing deductive reasoning into agreement with inductive, theory with fact, hypothesis with verification; this alone puts the relation of the natural and the supernatural in a light that we can endure.[1]

Let us therefore gaze steadily on the Christian Church if perchance we may discern her lineaments and her characteristics. For if Church History is the key to Universal History, the notes of the Church, the marks by which we may recognise her, are of world-wide importance, and neither Christianity, nor Theism, nor the course of society can be understood without them.

Now one mark or token of the Christian Church, indeed a primary characteristic, is to observe in all things the golden mean. She incorporates into her system a multitude of truths, yet is ever mindful that unity precedes multiplicity, that single truths represent one aspect only of truth, and cannot properly be understood by themselves; so that if we dwell on them overmuch as single and apart, we insensibly turn them from being truths into being errors: not that truth can contradict truth, but that our notions of truth can contradict each other, as being insufficient exhibitions, inadequate representations, partial apprehensions, instead of the whole truth.

It is not surprising then that to many the Christian Church appears in her history and teaching to be full of paradox, to be involved in contradiction. But they forget that from the very nature of her claims, from the weakness of human thought and the imperfections of human language, man's lack of understanding and of expression, they must expect to find in her, not contradictions but seeming contradictions or antinomies, for which without fail she provides a practical solution; and most often also a theoretical solution; but not always; else the infinite Creator could be fully grasped by the finite creature; which, according to the commonplace, would in itself be the greatest of contradictions. Thus the great antinomies of God being One yet Three, of Christ being God yet Man, of man being free yet in the hand of omnipotent foreknowledge, these are not to be harmonised in any synthesis man's intelligence can devise, but are to be received as mysteries which no imagination can depict. Our image of God "never is one, but broken into numberless partial aspects independent each of each. . . . We know one truth about Him and another truth, but we cannot image both of them together . . . we drop the one while we turn to take up the other." For purposes of devotion

reasonable estimate of Sir M. Monier-Williams (*Buddhism*, 1889) correcting former controversial and extravagant estimates like that of Rhys Davids raising the numbers of Buddhists to 500 millions. It may be added that the moral overestimates of Buddhism have been even more excessive than the numerical, and have required to be reduced to the level of reason. This has been done by many, and perhaps by none better than by Dahlmann in the *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*, Nov., 1897.

[1] For lack of this key we find that excellent advocates grow incoherent and faltering on the Christian claims. Because Christianity has only spread by degrees and only by degrees has exercised its social as distinct from its individual influence, they think that Christianity was misunderstood from the first, that "the glorious and comprehensive truth set forth in the parables of the kingdom was for centuries ignored or sadly narrowed and perverted, and is, in fact, very defectively apprehended even at the present day" (Flint's *Philosophy of History*, 2nd ed., p. 97). But how then can the Incarnation be the centre of the world's history? And if Christianity was given over for centuries to degrading thraldom, priestly obscurantism, false superstition; if it departed from truth, justice and liberty for ages (*ibid.*, pp. 121, 184, 343, 387), how could Christ have come in the fulness of time, and in Him all things have been renewed? or how could the martyrs have given the testimony of their blood on a misunderstanding? Thus a noble thesis falls to nought because of untenable presuppositions.

they must be dwelt on separately not in combination; but again not dwelt on exclusively, lest we rush in one direction beyond the limits of the truth.[1]

18. ANALOGOUS DIFFICULTIES IN NON-THEOLOGICAL MATTERS.

Similar limitations confront us in non-theological matters: the problem of free will has to be faced even by those who will not hear of revelation. Thus the genius of Schelling saw that history combined freedom and necessity, and he made brilliant efforts, one after another, to show how the combination could be effected, all indeed in vain as the clue was lacking. Again, we cannot deny the existence of space, though the idea can gain no rest in our minds; "for we find it impossible to say that it comes to a limit anywhere; and it is incomprehensible to say that it runs out infinitely; and it seems to be unmeaning if we say that it does not exist till bodies come into it, and thus is enlarged according to an accident."[2]

A similar dilemma afflicts us regarding time;[3] and even in physical science no experimentalist can answer the question how the will can act on the muscles; astronomy and biology seem in contradiction on the age of the earth; the nature of matter and force, the origin of motion, the origin of life, of sensation, of rational thought, all remain to mere natural investigation an impenetrable mystery. Again, in mathematical science the presence of truths seemingly irreconcilable have to be endured; "the existence of an infinite number of curves, which are able to divide a space, into which no straight line, though it be length without breadth, can ever enter . . . (and) certain lines, which approach to each other continually with a finite distance between them, yet never meet".[4] And every system of philosophy has its antinomies, its blind alleys, its crudities; and must needs fill up the gaps of the argument with assumptions and postulates.

We must learn then our limitations, must confess with sacred and profane writers that over-wisdom is folly, must be content with many a formula of definition which is not exact, but is some approximation to exactitude and sufficient for our purpose. To one integral subject, to one whole of which all the parts are correlative we direct our attention by means of sciences, which are partial views and give as their conclusion only abstractions which are true hypothetically and as far as they go, but do not represent whole and substantive things, and need correction by other sciences. Their truths are not the whole truth, must not be made the measure of all things, lest we confuse probability with certainty, inchoate and subordinate processes with final conclusions, and be led into inexplicable difficulties.

And when thus, for the sake of learning at least something, we have cut into fragments the unity of knowledge, the very energy with which we grasp one fragment lessens our hold on the others. For "any one study of whatever kind exclusively pursued deadens in the mind the interest, nay the perception of any other". All else appears dull and uncouth. To gaze intently for most of us is to concentrate our vision and to put aside a comprehensive view. If we are to mark the very spot where the sun sets on the horizon, we cannot see the glow on the mountains behind us nor the measureless depths of the many-coloured heaven to the right and the left of us.[5]

19. INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL REASONS FOR THE OBSCURITY OF GOD.

And if in temporal things the intellect can rarely discern truth as a whole, still less in the relation of God and the soul; inadequate views are all we can attain, not hitting the centre of truth but glancing aside to the right or the left; conceptions only analogously true and not to be pressed too far as if they were adequate and close fitting. Analogies we must have; for without figures of speech we cannot represent the timeless and spaceless; and thus symbolism is the inseparable companion of religion. It is quite true then that we cannot affirm anything exactly in the same sense (*univoce*) of God and man. This would be to form for ourselves a Deity in human fashion in our own minds; and though we attributed to

[1] *Grammar of Assent*, part i., chap. iv., § 2.

[2] *Idea of a University*, "Christianity and Scientific Investigation".

[3] Of the numerous criticisms on Kant's theory of time and space perhaps to many the most welcome may be that of Mr. Bertrand Russell in his *Principles of Mathematics*, 1903.

[4] *Idea of a University*, "Christianity and Scientific Investigation". Another pertinent example is to be found in the case of algebra, in the *Grammar of Assent*, chap. iv., § 1.

[5] See many passages in the *Idea of a University*, especially Discourse iii. and iv. and "A Form of Infidelity of the Day".

it the sum of all our virtues and gave it of our very best, it would be human after all —an anthropomorphic God. But we must not run into the other extreme of an unknowable God, as though nothing could be affirmed in common of the Creator and the creature, unless we played with words and used them in a wholly different sense (*æquivoce*) in the two affirmations. We are caught in no dilemma between anthropomorphism and agnosticism. For we have a third choice, and in speaking both of God and of man we can make use of a common term, not indeed simply, but by analogy, metaphorically, imperfectly, according to the measure of our apprehension. And in this way precisely, between the extremes that we can know all or can know nothing, we reach the mean that we can know something, and a something that is sufficient, nay our all and our salvation.[1]

And not merely from the very nature of things, from the necessities of ontology, from the rule of right reason, are we constrained to admit that God is partly knowable and partly unknowable, seen as in a glass darkly, half veiled and half revealed; but also from the needs of our moral nature, that we should live under the law of search and that He whom we worship should be a hidden God. Search is to be the law of earth and vision the law of heaven. It is God's will to be sought, the searching being our test. For He will be found by the diligent, humble, pure and awe-stricken seeker, but hidden from the eyes of pride and corruption. Therefore "He will neither overwhelm the minds of men with the oppression of His majesty, nor constrain their wills by the visible pageant of His justice". So "what hides Him most utterly from those who will not see Him, reveals Him most distinctly to those whose hearts are seeking Him". To these He is ever lifting the veil from His sanctuaries, filling their eyes with light and their hearts with sweetness. And love is the perpetual explanation of all except itself, how God can deign to seek man's love. For just as of old at the supreme moment when according to our feeble thoughts the need of disclosure was the greatest, the glory of Christianity was shrouded by the veil of an ignominious death, in the same manner continuous love perpetuates a continuous mystery. Even poor human love shares in some degree the mystical character and is above and beyond reason; much more therefore the love between God and man. But our love of God is the essence of true religion and the summing up of all holiness; so true religion must be mystical.[2]

[1] This truth is taught with his accustomed brevity and sense by St. Thomas, especially in the first fourteen Quaestiones of the *Summa Theologica*. In Ruskin's earlier and better writings many of these truths are expressed, not perhaps with theological accuracy, but at least with beautiful imagery: "Our whole happiness and power of energetic action depend on our being able to breathe and live in the cloud; content to see it opening here and closing there; rejoicing to catch through the thinnest films of it glimpses of stable and substantial things; but yet perceiving a nobleness even in the concealment, and rejoicing that a kindly veil is spread where the untempered light might have scorched us, or the infinite clearness wearied".—*Modern Painters*, vol. v.

20. APPLICATION OF THIS OBSCURITY TO THE CHURCH.

Although the Church of Christ is by her very nature visible, is a city set on a hill, she is also in a sense hidden, and a city covered with a cloud. Her very claim to be the continuation of the life of her Divine Founder, her history to be the mirror of the history of Christ to Whom she is mystically united as the spouse to the bridegroom, as the body to the head, involves a share in ignominy as well as in glory. From her very claim to be Divine she must be lit up indeed by Divine illumination, but also must be wrapped in the clouds and darkness that encompass the throne of the Most High. And though the cloud around the Church is partly the work of her enemies distorting her doctrines and calumniating her ministers, it comes mainly from her very nature, the continuous witness of a Divine and therefore mysterious message.

Hence it is no difficulty for the claims of the Christian Church, but a confirmation, when she appears involved in paradoxes: that we can understand Divine things and yet cannot understand; that we are free yet foreknown; that religion is mystical and yet rational; that suffering is vicarious and yet responsibility personal; that her teaching is the religion of sorrow and yet of joy; that the Church exalts the claims of family life and yet makes them subordinate; appears at once as a friend and a rival to the powers of the State. For she must follow her mis-

[2] The latter part of this section is drawn from many passages in Faber's *Blessed Sacrament*.

sion, and refuse to allow one aspect of her Divine message to exclude or obscure another. Thus "Christianity is dogmatical, devotional, practical all at once; it is esoteric and exoteric; it is indulgent and strict; it is light and dark; it is love and it is fear".[1]

And these seeming notes of discord are only the prelude to the harmony of the golden mean. For Holy Church will lean neither to the right nor to the left; neither to credulity that would make the actual coextensive with the possible; nor on the other hand to scepticism that would refuse to extend the possible beyond what is known as actual; she rejects alike the false simplicity of quietism and the false reasoning of intellectualism; is a mean between under-guidance of men and over-guidance; is not merely external religion, or merely internal, but the due combination of both; allows the alternation of epochs of expansion or assimilation and epochs of concentration or dogmatism; of tranquil large-mindedness during peace, and again of uniform discipline during warfare;[2] neither wholly accepts the ways of the world nor wholly refuses them, but, by a process of partial absorption and partial rejection, aims at the permeation by Christianity and continuous transformation of each ever-changing civilisation.

Let us trace, as best we may, some rude sketches to exemplify her course, scattered outlines for others to connect and to fill in: awaiting the time when some writer worthy of the task shall gather all together, construct the Church Record as the World Record, and so far as the dim vision of man can reach, make the outlines of human history clear.

[1] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, chap. i., § 1.

[2] Wilfrid Ward, *Life of Wiseman*, ii., p. 419.

PART II.

THE COURSE OF CHRISTIANITY.

21. TEN ANTINOMIES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Not as any final classification, not as exhausting the list of the Christian antinomies, but as a provisional attempt to number and name the more conspicuous among them, I have singled out ten; and with these the second part of this inquiry will be principally occupied.

These ten antinomies are as follows :—

1. The Church appears in opposition to intellectual civilisation and yet to foster it.

2. The Church appears in opposition to material civilisation and yet to foster it.

3. The Church represents a religion of sorrow and yet of gladness; teaches a morality which is austere and yet joyful.

4. The Church appears the opponent and yet the support of the State; its rival and yet its ally.

5. The Church upholds the equality of men and yet the inequality of property and power.

6. The Church is full of scandals and yet all holy; proclaims a law at once difficult and yet easy.

7. The Church upholds and yet opposes religious freedom and liberty of conscience.

8. The Church is one and yet Christendom has ever been divided.

9. The Church is ever the same and yet ever changing.

10. The Church is ever being defeated and yet is ever victorious.

Each of these ten antinomies deserves to itself a separate treatise wherein the historical details of the apparent contradiction would be set forth in fulness, and the historical sources diligently scrutinised, fairly appraised, clearly sorted and arranged for the benefit of scholars and students. But now to the present writer there falls a humbler task, to give a mere brief description, a mere popular outline of these ten seeming contradictions, and to set forth the conclusion as it were by anticipation.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHURCH AND CULTURE.

22. GROUND OF THE REPROACHES OF IGNORANCE AND ILLITERACY.

We have counted as the first antinomy that the Church appears in opposition to intellectual civilisation and yet to foster it.

Here is a striking paradox; the same Church charged with being a lover of darkness, fanatical, retrograde, seeing in the flesh nought but the devil, crushing the aspirations of man after the beautiful, chaining his thought, fearful of his science; and yet praised as the saviour of learning and literature, the constant promoter of study, the founder of universities, the inspirer and patron of the noblest examples of poetry and painting, sculpture and architecture.

To reconcile this contradiction an historical theory had been framed that in the middle period the Church was indeed in her place and the great promoter of culture, but its enemy in the Græco-Roman period that went before and in the times that came after. Now, if we strictly limit the middle period to the time between the sixth and the eleventh century, this theory may perhaps indicate the truth that where there is great deficiency of culture the Church sedulously

fosters it as did the Benedictine monks of those Dark Ages; and that where culture falls into excess, as before and after, she restrains it. But such generalities tell us little; and the explanatory theory by a grave historical blunder brackets together the days of Alfred the Great and Richard Cœur de Lion under the common title of mediæval,[1] and is no help in understanding the relations of Christianity to culture in the days of Origen and Cyprian, or in the days of St. Augustine, or later in those of St. Dominic in the thirteenth century, of St. Charles Borromeo in the sixteenth, or in the second quarter of the nineteenth in the days of Görres and Ozanam.

Here as elsewhere Christianity is a mean between extremes, a synthesis between two apparent antitheses.

Thus in one sense it is quite true that Christianity makes little of culture: mere dust in the balance compared with a virtuous life, and to be taken with due precaution lest it lead to the double evil of false doctrine and intellectual pride.

Rude fishermen were the first preachers of the Gospel, and the most intellectual of the Apostles reiterates his warnings against intellectualism: not to be wise above measure but to embrace the folly of the cross instead of the wisdom of this world, that before God was foolishness; God having chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and the weak to confound the strong, that no flesh should glory in His sight. And whereas worldly science puffeth up and philosophy can be emptiness and fallacy and vain pretence, it is the mission of Christianity to bring every intelligence as a captive to Christ, to Christ in whom are hidden all the treasures of true wisdom and true science.

Fourteen hundred years later the doctrine of the Imitation repeats the same lesson: it is the virtuous life that matters, not the fair speeches of the "best thinkers" of our time; or what avails to know by heart all the teachings of all philosophy and yet lack God's grace? Check the craving for knowledge; *Noli alta sapere;* there is much that it is unprofitable to know, and woe to him who forgets that the more he knows, the holier the life he is bound to lead. If a man knew all the secrets of science, what would it be but the vain vision of a passing world; let all the learned keep silence; all else but to be united to God is as nothing—with God who in one brief moment can teach more than a long course of deepest study; nor at the great assize shall we be asked what we have learnt, but how we have lived.

Let another interval go by, and hear the same teaching re-echoed by the Master of the nineteenth century: The labours of the Church have not had for their purpose to spread abroad knowledge, or cultivate reason, but to avert sin and to save the souls of men, compared with which the value of the whole world is but as dust and ashes. For it is not things of time that she places first, but things of eternity; and literature, science and art are things of time.

The note of ignorance and illiteracy was in fact an early reproach. Peter and John were described before the council as illiterate men and of the lower sort. Celsus and other pagans derided the Christians as stupid and uneducated, ignorant and credulous, as women, servants, slaves, as collected from the dregs of the people; and the Christian apologists confirm their general low level in the social and intellectual scale, a mixed unlettered multitude, yet lit by an inward vision that was hidden from the scornful eye of their cultivated adversaries.

And so far from art and splendour being requisite, the externals and trappings of religion, whenever need be, are set aside; the very vessels of the sanctuary are sold for the redemption of captives, the very highest form of worship conducted, for fear of the persecutor, in cellars and caverns or wind-swept heaths or frozen wastes; the sacraments administered amid the horrors of the battlefield or the squalor of the low quarters of a great city.

For the fine arts no less than literature and science are bid keep in their place, recognise their subordinate position, that they are only one part of a mighty system, that whatever is good in them comes from above, and that for all their fairness they become imposture and corruption when made a minister to pride and sensuality.

[1] If in literature we must separate "modern" from "mediæval," the change is not at the "renaissance" but towards the close of the eleventh century. Modern verse is closely akin to the rhymes of France and Provence; Chretien de Troyes and then Walther von der Vogelweide are part of "modern" literature; and the gulf is not between Chaucer and Dr. Johnson, but between Chaucer and the author of Beowulf.—See W. P. Ker's two lucid volumes, *Epic and Romance*, 1897, and *The Dark Ages*, 1904.

Better a crowded and devout congregation in a church constructed and adorned in violation of every rule of art, than a few cold worshippers in a faultless building amid masterpieces of adornment; better having one eye to enter into the kingdom of heaven, than having two eyes to be cast into outer darkness.

23. THE FOUNDATIONS OF ÆSTHETICISM.

Nevertheless the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the gifts of intellect are His gifts, their purpose His glory. Whatever was beautiful and seemly in pagan worship, as far as not inseparably connected with falsehood or sensuality, was gradually adopted by the Christian Church; temples and altars and images and lights and incense and processions and votive offerings and sacerdotal vestments. Or were the enemies of Christianity to be left the monopoly of seemly worship, and the fair gifts of the Most High only to be used to His dishonour? Is not imagination the gift of the Author of nature, and the Author of nature the Author of the Church? Hence every kind of natural religious symbolism has been consecrated to the service of truth, and the craving of man's natural emotions reasonably satisfied. Extremes meet, and the spirit of the iconoclast or the puritan calls forth with its harsh note the sinister echoes of rebellion crying out that art is its own end, and of licentiousness crying out that the end of art is sensual gratification, and of pessimism, that art is the bloom of decay: so low we fall if we forget that of all that is beautiful God is the archetype and the origin.

Let us listen rather to another teacher, how the musical sounds of instrumental harmony are an outward and earthly form under which great wonders unknown seem to be typified. "There are seven notes in the scale; make them fourteen; yet what a slender outfit for so vast an enterprise! What science brings so much out of so little? Out of what poor elements does some great master in it create his new world? Shall we say that all this exuberant inventiveness is a mere ingenuity or trick of art like some game or fashion of the day without reality, without meaning?" Or "is it possible that that inexhaustible evolution and disposition of notes, so rich yet so simple, so intricate yet so regulated, so various yet so majestic, should be a mere sound, which is gone and perishes? Can it be that those mysterious stirrings of heart, and keen emotion, and strange yearnings after we know not what, and awful impressions from we know not whence, should be wrought in us by what is unsubstantial, and comes and goes, and begins and ends in itself? It is not so; it cannot be. No; they have escaped from some higher sphere; they are the outpourings of eternal harmony in the medium of created sound; they are echoes from our Home; they are the voice of Angels, or the Magnificat of Saints, or the living laws of Divine Governance, or the Divine Attributes; something are they besides themselves, which we cannot compass, which we cannot utter,—though mortal man, and he perhaps not otherwise distinguished above his fellows, has the gift of eliciting them."[1]

Hear again another writer, himself indeed, alas! an After-Christian, but raised by his very subject to the Christian level, where he tells us rightly how poetry transcends science, appealing to the something more than one limited faculty. "It is not Linnæus or Cavendish or Cuvier who gives the true sense of animals, or water, or plants, who seizes their secrets for us, who makes us participate in their life; it is Shakespeare with his

> daffodils
> That come before the swallow dares, and take
> The winds of March with beauty.

It is Wordsworth with his

> voice . . . heard
> In springtime from the cuckoo-bird,
> Breaking the silence of the seas
> Among the farthest Hebrides."[2]

The exponents of physical science can describe with much accuracy the cosmic dust, the refraction of light, the degrees of moisture, and other causes that make the sky what it is in the ruddy sunsets of a stormy summer; or the forces that uphold the stone roof of a Gothic cathedral a hundred feet above our heads; or the chemical analysis of the pigments of Raphael's Madonna degli Ansidei. But of the main thing they tell us nothing; still less those who would explain in terms of materialistic psychology our appreciation of the beautiful as no more than visual, auditory, or motor sensations, the mere awakening of pleasing emotions by an organic stimulus. For to those who have spiritual eyes to see and ears to hear,

[1] *Oxford University Sermons*, Sermon xv.
[2] Matthew Arnold, *Essays in Criticism*, ed. 1865, p. 8.

the beauty of nature and of art point heavenward; through the medium of created form and colour we gain some glimpse of uncreated beauty; the glow of crimson cloud and depths of golden light are a faint foreglance of the city that hath no need of sun or moon to light it, the soaring columns and fretted roof are to lead us upwards to the seven pillars of the Jerusalem that is on high; to depict the human countenance divine, the highest achievement of earthly painting, though but a sketch on the walls of a prison house, is an effort after the unattainable beauty of glorified man.[1]

24. THE CHURCH AND ALL FORMS OF ART.

Now given this view of music and painting, of sculpture and architecture, of all that is beautiful in this world of sense, it is plain that these good things should be led captive to Christ; that the best they could give should be at the service of Christian ritual; their utmost efforts, the very marbles and mosaics of Santa Sophia, the very choir of Beauvais, the very dome of St. Peter's, being all unworthy of the surpassing dignity of the Christian sacrifice.

But once again let us beware of overstepping the mean, of confounding good art and good life, of forgetting the manifold deficiencies which any genuine history of Christian art would have to unfold; lest we invite the mockery of the unbeliever who would bid us compare the sprawling angels of the rococo period with the sculptures of the Parthenon, or the clumsy front of St. Peter's with the Flavian amphitheatre. But this we can say, that Christianity having in common with most religions the encouragement of art, exceeds them in the greatness of its encouragement by the central doctrine of the bodily presence of the Divinity; and exceeds them in the greatness of artistic inspiration of which its sublime doctrines can be the occasion. Nor, if it puts restraint on the artist, is the restraint other than a wise guard against abuse; unlike Mahomet's polygamous Methodism[2] that is fatal to all but the lowest forms of painting and sculpture because it forbids us to represent the human form or any natural substance such as fruit or flowers. But then the Church herself can neither create art nor hinder its decline, like the decline of Gothic from the glory of Lincoln Minster to the ignominy of Bath Abbey, or the change from the manifold graces of the early renaissance to the graceless piles that laid a heavy load on Europe for 200 years, or from the art of Mantegna and Luini to the square miles of roof and wall covered with tasteless mediocrity.

Indeed the course of art and literature remains inexplicable; we can indeed trace the change from rude and simple art to art well trained in the technique of drawing and colouring, just as we can trace the change from naïve and heroic literature to conventional and civilised. But the first step accomplished, we seem unable to go further and trace any causes except the obvious and negative generalisation that art cannot bloom amid widespread anarchy and poverty. More than this we can scarcely affirm; and we must be content with registering the annals of art rather than attempting to write its history. There is no standing, as in physical and historical science, on the shoulders of those who have gone before us. The spirit of art bloweth where it listeth, and none can say why or for how long. Why was Venice so conspicuously its home, and the kindred republic of Genoa as a stranger's house? How account for the uprising of Gothic architecture in Northern France and reaching in a few years its highest pinnacle of glory; or centuries later the succession in Germany of unrivalled musicians. Again, in the very ages when the architecture of Europe lay low, a bloom of beauty was being spread over the vast area of Spanish America. The traveller stands entranced at the sanctuary of Esquipulas raised on a platform in the open country with four great towers and a central dome all of dazzling white, built in mid-eighteenth century; or at the blue-tiled dome and red stone campanile of the cathedral of Zacatecas, and the many other glories of Spanish American art of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[3]

[1] Perhaps among the moderns none has excelled the Norman peasant painter, Jean François Millet, in showing the pathos and dignity of man in the humblest surroundings, a dignity which our own great painter Lord Leighton, in spite of marvellous technical perfection, failed to grasp, because it was the Hellenic ideal rather than the Christian that he painted.

[2] To borrow Prof. Ker's illuminating phrase, *The Dark Ages*, p. 14.

[3] A curious parallel to the ignorance among the "educated" classes concerning the "Middle

But this is no history of art; enough that the Christian Church wherever her influence is strong, is a perpetual incitement to the artist without indeed giving any guarantee for his success, and is a perpetual framework ready at hand for artistic adornment.

25. PHILOSOPHIC CULTURE AND THE CHURCH.

Let us turn to another department of culture, so far as the works of intellect can be separated from those of emotion and imagination, and the field of philosophy from that of art.

The intellectual truths scattered in Fore-Christian religions and philosophies were gathered up one by one into Christian theology. The Church has ever been "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing and asking them questions; claiming to herself what they said rightly, correcting their errors, supplying their defects, completing their beginnings, expanding their surmises, and thus gradually by means of them enlarging the range and refining the sense of her teaching".[1] And just as the very affinities of Catholic worship to pagan rites are a witness to its fitness, so also the very affinities to pagan mythology are a witness to the truth of the Catholic doctrine of heavenly mediators, a doctrine which corrects what was previously imperfect, and points to the substantial unity of the human mind fitted by nature for theism.

Hence the Church has gathered in, from age to age, the harvest of a hundred philosophies; and those who seemed most antagonistic she has forced, when the due time came, to yield up for her service the good that was in them. Thus "the theology of St. Thomas, nay of the Church of his period, is built on that very Aristotelianism which the early Fathers denounce as the source of all misbelief, and in particular of the Arian and Monophysite heresies".[2] An excellent historian[3] has traced how the philosophy of the Fore-Christians was founded anew by Christianity; their confused longings fulfilled, and their partial view made complete. Thus by the recognition of the holy will of a Personal God, a sure foundation was reached for understanding the double truth that the world was created, and that man was subject to moral law. Thus the notions of God and Self and the Cosmos were no longer mingled in confusion; for though God was in the world He was above the world (transcendent as well as immanent); and though man was of the earth, natural and transitory, he was also of heaven, supernatural and eternal. Thus man was raised out of the realm of mere appearances, of shallow grubbing on the surface of things; he was raised out of himself beyond the narrow circling around his own personality; and he entered a realm of mysticism, aiming at intimate union with an indwelling God (immanent in His creatures) and at some participation in the Divine nature; yet ever held in check by the Divine law and the transcendent majesty of the Creator; so that the fountains of self-deceit were stopped up, and man could not become a law to himself, his own master, nay his own God, self-centred, self-complete (reducing science to autosophy and action to autonomy), but rather was to know by believing and to reign by serving.

This balanced mind, this clear vision of innocence, this golden mean of Christian teaching, made it possible to do what Plato and Aristotle had not succeeded in doing, to place theology and philosophy in right relation, to make philosophy by stooping to be a handmaid (*ancilla theologiæ*), rise supreme over all the other sciences, itself the sovereign science, the harmony of all, the preserver of the unity of all knowledge; and the nearest approach, ere we pass *ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem*, to the restful vision of the entire truth.[4]

So it became possible for Christianity to make a fearless appropriation of Fore-Christian philosophy. The salt was at hand wherewith all could be savoured; and the adoption of Platonic terminology by the Fathers of the Church could be done with the utmost freedom, precisely

Ages" when Hallam's work was first published, is the ignorance now concerning the vast empire of Spain in North and South America for 300 years, an empire not lost till the After-Christian spirit had seized on the ruling classes of Old Spain.

[1] See the whole luminous passage *Development of Christian Doctrine*, chap. viii., *ad fin.*

[2] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, chap. xii., § 8. Some details can be found in Mr. Wilfrid Ward's *Witnesses to the Unseen*, pp. 86-90.

[3] Willmann, *Geschichte des Idealismus*, vol. ii., 1896, especially the chapters on "Refounding of Philosophy by Christianity," "Christian Idealism linked to that of Antiquity," and "St. Augustine".

[4] See especially the third Discourse in the *Idea of a University*. Had these discourses been familiar to Dr. Flint, a great advantage would have accrued to his instructive essay on "Philosophy as *Scientia Scientiarium*" prefixed to his *History of Classifications of the Sciences*, 1904.

because they knew where Plato as the voice of God-given reason became silent, and Plato as the voice of erring man began to speak. The possession of a criterion of truth and error gave the same freedom to adopt Aristotelian language in the days of Scholasticism; and gives the same security in our own time; so that when a specious subjectivism bids us reject all certitude, hold fast to nothing, shrink from putting any limit to the intellectual progress of humanity, admit a ceaseless self-making self-evolving world, and soul, and God: Christian theology says, No; for we have tried whether your philosophy can express the truths of Holy Faith, we have tested it by the unfailing touchstone in our hands, and have found it wanting.

26. HER GOLDEN MEAN IN PHILOSOPHY.

Indeed in philosophy as elsewhere it is ever the golden mean proclaimed by the genuine voice of Christianity. The claims of explicit reasoning, of criticism and argumentation, are not rejected, only put in their proper place as part of a whole, an assistant towards attaining the truth and an excellent negative test, but not the supreme teacher. We must recognise that faith and tradition and unconscious inference are also our informants; that we are not self-sufficing in regard to knowledge, but must cling to others, accept their witness and authority, admit in many things the *consensus humani generis*, nay that the *vox populi* is the *vox Dei*, or perish in our wilful individualism. But then testimony is not everything; and if rationalism is an exaggeration on one side, so is traditionalism on the other. To say we can adequately express in words all valid inferences, is to fall from our middle way, as though there were not many of the most valuable of them and most practical, nay the very principles of reason and morality, too subtle or too obscure or too complex for statement. But we fall equally on a different side, if we scoff at logic, deny the validity of words, or the use of definitions, and reduce science, sacred and profane alike, to a condition of mist.

Similarly the Church keeps the golden mean between the materialism that will not recognise the higher and spiritual side of man, and a miscalled idealism that is so enamoured of the higher side as to ignore the reality of the lower; she will not allow the crude realism (like that of Tertullian) which confuses the corporal with the real; nor again the nominalism which transmutes all super-sensual things into mental products, merely distinguished by the name; rather she chooses the middle course and unites a true idealism with a true realism. Indeed from the time of St. Augustine, the central figure in history, who was the heir of all ancient wisdom, the starting point of all new, the Church has handed down with unbroken continuity a *philosophia perennis*[1] ever growing more comprehensive and gaining force from every controversy, those yielding perhaps the greatest contribution who have been in appearance, from Porphyry to Kant, her greatest opponents.

27. HER INEVITABLE CONFLICT WITH EACH TIME-SPIRIT.

And thus we must expect an intellectual conflict between the Church and the world. The intellectual position known as the spirit of the age (*der Zeitgeist*) incessantly varying with the age, displays amid many variables one constant character of opposition to the Church. This is to be expected, because contemporary science and the fashions of the day are inevitably defective and distorted; not wholly wrong, but mingling together extravagance and good sense, and presenting a teaching that cannot claim our assent, till the dross be separated from the gold. This is done by degrees, and then, after having moulded, leavened, checked, and corrected the new ways of science or life, the Church adopts in tranquillity and assimilates what at last has been proved to be sound theory and wholesome practice. Only this tardy Concordat is no bar to a similar conflict beginning over again. We smile now at the thought that the study of Greek literature, and Homer in particular, could seriously imperil the Christian faith; we are in no danger of being so impressed by the majestic structure of the Roman Law as to think it an oracle of heaven and give the name of priests to its lawyers; we no longer hold it of vital importance to eschew Gothic barbarism, to write Ciceronian Latin, and to conform our lives to an imaginary picture of Roman or Greek civilisation; we are little touched by the eighteenth century repugnance to enthusiasm; indeed think little worth having that fails to enkindle it; even the ideals of our own fathers set forth in the political

[1] This is the main thesis of Willmann's *Geschichte des Idealismus*.

and economic liberalism of barely fifty years[1] ago, appear to us empty and unreal; yet in the fourth century, in the twelfth, in the fifteenth, in the eighteenth, in the nineteenth, the Church had to face these overmastering views of learning and living, and mould them to her purposes. And are we to expect our own time to be without its favourite notions, its shibboleths, its presuppositions, its exaggerations, its distortion of the relative magnitudes of truths and duties? The more completely we are the children of our own age the more behind the age will the Church appear; yet might equally be called before the age, which is but a transitory phase of human thought and imagination encompassed by a more than human society that is eternal.

How pitiable then the lack of knowledge, how gross the self-deception of those who take occasion of this chronic discord between the Church and the world to make shipwreck of their faith. Instead of possessing their souls in peace, instead of knowing when it is the time to wait and be silent, they press forward sword in hand for an instant solution, demand an immediate triumph, cannot suffer with Christ or endure the appearance of uncertainty and defeat. And as the Church fails to support them, they must needs reform the Church who in her essence is irreformable; and forgetting that the first reform must be within themselves, they raise, all laden with their infirmities, the standard of revolt; and because they cannot see the immediate solution of some antinomy, they leave the realm of tempered light for the realm that is for ever darkened by irreconcilable contradictions.[1]

[1] See the essay on "Unchanging Dogma and Changeful Man" in Wilfrid Ward's *Problems and Persons*, 1903.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHURCH AND PROSPERITY.

28. SEEMING OPPOSITION TO MATERIAL CIVILISATION.

We have counted as the second antinomy that the Church appears in opposition to material civilisation and yet to foster it.

In the solemn ritual of Christian baptism the catechumen, about to be baptised, is asked what he seeks from the Church of God; and answering, "faith," he is asked further what he will gain by faith; whereupon he answers "life everlasting". He professes no expectation that the great sacrament he is to receive is to be for the benefit of his temporal life; at certain times and places manifold damage to that life, and even the total loss of it, were not improbable consequences of his act; and at all times he was pledged to the renunciation of no small part of it known as the pomps and works of the Evil One. His eyes were not to be opened to new methods of enrichment, new rules of health, new refinement of enjoyment, but wandering in the night time of this present world the eyes of his heart were to be opened to recognise the triune and eternal Creator, and to walk in the ways of truth. Moreover, in the solemn exorcisms, one after another, the truth is reiterated, so alien to the dreams of earthly empire and worldly aggrandisement, that the end is surely coming when humanity will perish and the earth be judged by fire.

Truly it seems but scant encouragement to build up a great empire, when the empire, as surely as each single citizen, is doomed to death; and when the Christian teachers from age to age have uttered their warning of *vanitas vanitatum*, have taught us that the schemes of mighty kings are but as the sports of children, and have put as the test of importance the unrelenting question: *Quid hoc ad æternitatem?* Or how can we adorn and cultivate the earth or make the desert flourish like the slopes of Lebanon or the rose gardens of Jericho, when we remember the end, and the words of the prophet, the earth as a garden of pleasure before the devouring flames, and after them as the dread solitude of the wilderness?

And the spirit of the Christian Church has remained persistent, ever seeming to make light of worldly prosperity, and to be set up in contradiction to the philosophy and practice of the world. The whole mighty structure of the Church, through so many ages, has had one primary end, the individual soul. It is not nations and their temporal prosperity, but souls and their eternal salvation, that

[1] This was written in 1906.

are her concern, and for whom all things else must be sacrificed. And this being her errand, to heal from inward and spiritual wounds, to protect from a supernatural foe, to lead to a supernatural end these individuals committed to her charge; all else in comparison must be disregarded.[1]

And her purpose being to reconcile and unite the soul with its Maker, it follows that her standard for judging the relative importance of various virtues and vices is very different from that of the world; of the world that makes the immediate bearing on temporal prosperity the standard, and thus abhors external acts of violence, but pays no regard to what is internal, whether a man has committed murder or adultery in his heart; whereas it is the heart of which the Church takes note, whether full or empty of faith, of purity, of charity; nor reckons the homicidal act of a sudden outburst of passion so grave as the inward malice which daily wishes a rival's death. Hence, for what are called the failures of society, weaklings, outcasts, criminals, she has ever shown a singular tenderness, inasmuch as for them, no less than for the orderly and prosperous, flowed the well-springs of Calvary.

Thus driven on by her over-mastering principles the Church incurs the reproach of fostering poverty, beggary and improvidence; it is a plausible reproach; nay from Gospel days to our own we see again and again how the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.

29. YET ITS SUPPORT—BY CHECKING RECKLESS GREED.

Nevertheless this very Church that makes so light of this world, of all the kingdoms thereof and their glory, is their very pillar and prop; and without professing to advance material civilisation becomes indirectly its powerful promoter. And this chiefly in three ways.

First, by the very appeal to men to follow ideals more lofty than those that the vain vision of this world can offer, and by the plain spoken condemnation of covetousness as one of the seven deadly sins, the Christian teaching puts a drag on the unscrupulous greed (the Greek πλεονεξία) that grasps at its own present enrichment, all reckless of how the wealth may be won, all reckless of the consequences of that winning. The careful husbanding of the sources of wealth, the far-seeing and orderly development of national resources, the far-seeing and humane treatment of the poorer classes, are in contradiction to the heedless pursuit of wealth that fells forests without replanting, extracts from the soil its elements of fertility without replacing them, empties fisheries without restocking them, exhausts mines without providing for the day of exhaustion, seizes on the labour of the young and of women without regarding the future provision of a healthy race, forces even adults and males to unhealthy overwork, displays immense energy, talent and time in the barren task of over-reaching others, and making gain from their loss. And the wealth thus ill earned is not spent for the most part in that rational consumption that ministers to right living (the Aristotelian τὸ εὖ ζῆν); but rather is written down in the books of the higher statistics as a negative acquisition, and is speedily dissipated in senseless display or wasteful sensuality.

But the Church is ever at work checking this wasteful production, checking this wasteful consumption, checking the social discord and social hatred that they engender, and thus is the very salt of the body politic, an antiseptic against threatening corruption and dissolution.

30. BY ASSERTING THE DIGNITY OF DUTY AND LABOUR.

Secondly, the Church having emphatically taught the dignity and duty of labour, has supplied a stronger motive for honest daily toil than dread of the lash or the prison house. To effect this rehabilitation of labour[2] example has been added to teaching: the example first of all of Him who was blacksmith and carpenter, the son (as Celsus says in derision) of a poor workwoman (*pauperculæ operariæque matris*) with workmen as disciples; then the example of St. Paul practising as well as preaching manual labour; the example of those of high birth, like St. Crispinianus, practising a servile trade; of noble matrons working diligently at home; of the monks of Palestine and Egypt, men of high position among them, exercising a multitude of trades, self-supporting though tens of thousands in number, nay sending forth supplies to regions stricken with

[1] See Lecture viii. of *Anglican Difficulties*.

[2] Paul Allard's *Les Esclaves Chrétiens* remains an excellent account of this, though the first edition was published as early as 1876.

famine; of the monks of St. Basil in whose rule was conspicuous the duty of labour, and in whom the old Roman vigour, the *improbus labor* of the days of Cincinnatus or Regulus, seemed renewed. Then later in the West, where the indolent barbarians, almost as much as the slave-stricken society of the Empire, needed a living example of voluntary work, the Benedictine monks gave them the example: the overabundant forests of the northern plain cleared, marshes drained, dry land irrigated, cultivation extended, many new crops and fruits acclimatised, bridges and roads built, refuges for travellers set on desert ways by these pious hands, to say nothing of the salvage of Greek and Latin literature, that threatened to disappear as Babylonian and Phœnician had disappeared before them, but were saved by the Church and monasticism.[1]

Moreover in the eleventh century, the enthusiastic movement in favour of order and peace that arose in Aquitaine under the name of the Peace of God, and spread through Western Europe, was encouraged, propagated and enforced by the clergy, and as regulated and made practical in 1041, established a truce (*Treuga Dei*) for all combatants from Wednesday at sunset to Monday at sunrise, besides a permanent peace for the unarmed clergy, merchants, pilgrims, women and peasants. Even the imperfect observation of this truce and peace was a great help to material civilisation; and the salutary principle of protecting the cultivator of the soil, and shielding the peasantry, the women and the children, was continued by the religious institution of chivalry.

The work of transforming desert and marsh into fruitful field and flowery meadow was continued by the Cistercians (an offshoot of the Benedictines), and later in the seventeenth century by the Trappists; nay to this day the same work may be seen accomplished in many parts of the world, as South Africa and Western Australia; and the full benefit of monastic tenure can be gauged a little by the desolation that has followed its destruction, the hillsides stripped of their protecting forests, the water let loose in the valleys, the fair garden choked with weeds, the numerous inhabitants, that had gathered round the homes of religion, forced to choose between starvation and flight; waste seen for example in England in the reign of Edward VI., in the plains watered by the South American Parana in the reign of Charles III. of Spain, in the valleys of California under the early Mexican Republic, in the hapless province of Basilicata in Italy of to-day.

It seems then, after all, that even material civilisation has a friend in Christian teaching; and that those who use the earth as though they used it not, who daily proclaim that it will perish as grass cast into the oven, yet because they treat it with reverence and restraint, because they recognise more than meets the senses in its crystal streams, fair flowers, fragrant woods, singing birds, green meadows and fruitful fields, would not have the work of God's hands recklessly defaced by man's work; but rather adorned to the utmost as being not merely a Divine work but the very guest chamber of the Divinity—it is men such as these who use the earth to the best ultimate advantage.[2]

And thus the chosen people have gathered once more the spoils of the Egyptians. For the most graceful and salutary of Fore-Christian superstitions, how the woods and waters were peopled with divinities and were to be secured from reckless profanation, and reverence to be given to our sacred Mother Earth, beliefs in themselves allied with polytheism or pantheism; and perhaps also the geomantic superstition called *Feng-shui* amid the multitudinous Chinese, with the similar effect of orderly restraint—these are but the distorted realisations or imperfect anticipations of Christian truth.

31. BY UPHOLDING FAMILY LIFE.

And in a third way, in her teaching on family life, the Christian Church is a

[1] On this intellectual rescue see the fascinating work of Hartmann Grisar, *Geschichte Roms und der Päpste*, vol. i., 1901, especially numbers 343 and 454.

[2] An exaggeration of this truth was taught in the sixties by Charles Périn, Professor of Political Economy at the University of Louvain, author of *La Richesse dans les sociétés chretiennes*. He was right in emphasising (bk. i., chap. iv.) the fact that the life of Christian people was full of apparent contradictions; but overstated his case in many of his propositions, *e.g.*, "c'est le mépris des richesses qui engendre la richesse". Still remember he lived in the days when Political Economy taught *ex cathedra* a number of "scientific truths" now relegated to the lumber heap; and living under the spell of those illusions Périn's half-truths on "abstinence" and "population" are more meritorious than the easier whole truths of those who live when the spell has been broken.

powerful support of material civilisation. For the family is the very prop of that civilisation; where it is weak and lax, civilisation is parasitic and precarious; but where it is strong, great nations have rested on its strength. And just as superstition has been accidentally or rather providentially beneficial by teaching reverence for the earth, so the doctrine of ancestor worship in its many historical forms has been beneficial by teaching family reverence, and though false, is a thousand times truer than the imagined enlightenment of the After-Christian family. So among the Romans of the regal times and the Greeks of the Homeric age, venerating the spirits of their ancestors and the private gods of the house; so also among the ancient Egyptians; so again to this day in its elaboration among millions of Hindus; as a powerful force among the Japanese, and all-pervading among the Chinese.

But the Christian Church, the sublime vessel of all truth, cannot rest on any illusion however graceful or practical, and her teaching on family life once again keeps the golden mean between excess and defect in the strictness of the bonds of kinship; forbidding worship but enjoining reverence; hostile to the total subjection but also to the total independence of women; rejecting the right of parents to force or forbid the marriage of their children, but also maintaining the right of parents to educate their children and control their youth; regarding marriage as the providential state for the great mass of men and women; confirming it as monogamous, indissoluble and religious; exalting it as a Christian Sacrament overflowing with supernatural graces, and bearing a mystical significance; and yet exalting celibacy still more, as the providential state for the few who were to be united in a higher and more than earthly union, and were to form while on earth the vanguard of continence, and by the example of this celestial life to protect the terrestrial family from all inroads of corruption.

The essentials of Christian family life being kept intact, the accidental and accessory parts might vary and have varied according to times and places, national peculiarities, conditions of civilisation; such accidentals for example as the legal rules of succession to property at death, the father's power to dispose of property during his life-time, the rights of children over their separate earnings, whether brothers dwell united in joint families or are scattered in separate establishments, and the strength or laxity of the tie between remoter relatives. Such accidentals have varied, but not the fundamental relations of husband and wife, parent and child; and nations that rest on that foundation have within themselves in spite of external calamities an ever-renewed fountain of recovery.

Thus the Church accused of being "other-worldly" or *weltflüchtig*, and the opponent of material civilisation, is seen by those who look below the surface, to be of that civilisation the surest guarantee.

CHAPTER III.

CHRISTIAN MORALITY.

32. THE PREACHING OF ABJECTION AND ASCETICISM.

We have counted as the third antinomy, that the Church represents a religion of sorrow and yet of gladness; teaches a morality which is austere and yet joyful.

Of the austerity taught from the very beginning of Christianity, there is no manner of doubt, nor of the moral impossibility of unaided obedience to the Christian law. The pride of man is rudely confronted with the humiliating confession of his own impotence and guilt; "any standard of duty which does not convict him of real and multiplied sins, and of incapacity to please God of his own strength, is untrue; and any rule of life, which leaves him contented with himself, without fear, without anxiety, without humiliation, is deceptive; it is the blind leading the blind". So the confession of sin enters into the highest saintliness; and while the self-complacency of man is an abomination before God, self-prostration is the very badge and token of His servants. The saints of Christ, one and all, the young and unspotted, the aged and most mature, he who has sinned least, he who has repented most, the fresh innocent brow, and the hoary head, they unite in this one litany: "O God, be merciful to me a sinner".

Nor can they escape from their conclusion precisely because each advance in Divine love has brought them a clearer vision of the All-Holy, All-Beautiful, All-Perfect One, and the contrast with themselves makes them sink into the earth with self-contempt and self-abhorrence.[1]

Moreover, we find that the tremendous truths proclaimed by Christianity exact a corresponding high standard of duty. The Christian is called upon to fight daily against the world, the flesh, and the devil; to deny himself; to take up his cross and follow Christ; and is warned that only through many tribulations can he enter the kingdom of God.

Nor are these teachings left as vague generalities. The strongest passions of man are to be kept under rigid control; the very hidden thoughts of his heart, even for these he is held responsible no less than for the outward deed. Not the smallest indulgence is granted in the relation of the sexes to youthful frailty; and outside the indissoluble marriage tie, an absolute chastity is inflexibly upheld.[2] The man in the stress and strain of middle life, with envious rivals, interested calumniators, unpitying foes around him, is forbidden even to wish them evil. The old man resting after a life of honest toil, and enjoying his well-earned riches, is not left in tranquillity; but warned of his pressing responsibilities, that his position is perilous but for abundant deeds of mercy, and that if he set his heart on his riches and his honours they will assuredly, for all their honest earning, drag him down to perdition. And the deeds have followed the doctrine; asceticism, mortification in a hundred forms, of body and of desire, fasting and watching, and long prayers, and long silence, and taming the flesh and breaking the will, and self-sought humiliation, from the days of the great ascetic St. Paul the Apostle in the first century to the days of his namesake St. Paul of the Cross in the eighteenth, nay in the Church to this day and this hour.

33. HOSTILITY OF THE WORLD AND ITS DOCTRINE OF PLEASURE.

Shall we then exclaim: O intolerable burden! O pitiful self-delusion! O grievous yoke of superstition! the bright world made dark, the gaiety of life turned to sorrow, man's freedom to servitude? So appears the Christian religion to many of this generation, just as it appeared to many before them; and not Christianity only, but the forecourts of Christianity in the Old Law, and even all religion to the unbelieving heart.

Thus we read in the second chapter of the Book of Wisdom, written in the days of great material civilisation, exhortations to pleasure that might be taken from the pages of many modern heralds of revolt. "Come therefore and let us enjoy the good things that are present and let us speedily use the creatures as in youth. Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments: and let not the flower of the time pass by us. Let us crown ourselves with roses before they be withered; let no meadow escape our riot." And as a God-fearing life was a tacit condemnation of the godless, such life was not to be permitted; being in fact a public annoyance and offence, to which no reasonable man could extend toleration. "Let us therefore lie in wait for the just, because he is not for our turn, and he is contrary to our doings, and upbraideth us with transgressions of the law, and divulgeth against us the sins of our way of life. He boasteth that he has the knowledge of God, and calleth himself the son of God. He is become a censurer of our thoughts. He is grievous unto us, even to behold; for his life is not like other men's."

Thus again Lucretius makes use of the exquisite medium of his poetry to express his loathing and hatred towards the doctrine of stern duty, of strict responsibility, of dread liability to sin; and as a happy contrast to the heavy yoke of religion, shows us the easy rule of *Alma Venus*. And if his view of religion was the true one, it would indeed be the work of every generous mind to extirpate this joy-killing pestilence, to judge Christianity, in the manner of Tacitus, as an *exitiabilis superstitio*, guilty of hatred of the human race, and to repeat with Voltaire, *écrasez l'infâme*.

Indeed the Roman Empire in the height of its power tried to crush this unworldly religion that from the Roman standpoint of worldly wisdom appeared as criminal madness. And though the great persecution failed, the spirit of the godless world survived; and its aims and views have been summed up for us by St. Augustine, just as the great empire of law and order,

[1] *Occasional Sermons*, Sermon ii.

[2] For example, in Japan it was the moral difficulty that in the sixteenth century was the great obstacle to conversion. A contemporary tells how the Jesuit Fathers were begged in vain to relax the rigour of the Sixth Commandment and thus gain a harvest of conversions. See H. Thurston, in *The Month*, March, 1905, pp. 304, 305.

of material and intellectual civilisation, which gave to the world's votaries all that for them made life worth living, was crumbling away.

What sort of commonwealth, he asks, did those wish who accused Christianity of the public ruin? There must be all good things in abundance, victory in war, or better still, a well-established peace. Let the rich and powerful daily grow in their riches and power, in order to meet the daily expenses needed to bind the weak to their service. Among freemen the poor[1] must serve the rich, in order to enjoy food in abundance and an easy quiet life under exalted patronage; while the rich will make use of the poor freemen to be their convenient dependants and serve as adjuncts to their patron's splendour.

Let the commonwealth applaud those who provide, not forsooth for the intangible public welfare, but for the tangible public pleasures. Nothing is to be enforced or forbidden on the plea of public morality: and the law is simply to look at damage to another's property or person or health or enjoyment; but otherwise every one is to be wholly free to do as it pleases him with his own property and his own slaves, and even with the free as it pleases him, provided they on their part are willing. Let there be abundant provision of public prostitutes for the especial benefit of those who cannot afford such pleasures in their own private establishments. Let the finest houses be built and nobly furnished, and within them let men eat and drink and play to their hearts' content, just as they please, day and night. Let the professional buffoons and dancers be everywhere, and the theatres be filled with the applause of indecent merriment and every variety of the most savage or most filthy pleasure. Let him be reckoned a public enemy to whom such a state of happiness is displeasing; and whoso attempts to change or to remove it, close his mouth, drive him from his place, put an end to his life. And let those be true gods who take measures to provide this state of happiness for the people and make it lasting: to them and theirs be all the worship and all the forms of it they may wish: if only they will make sure that nothing is to be feared from war or from pestilence or from any other calamity, to mar the enjoyment of this Sardanapalan felicity.[2]

84. THIS PLEASURE NOT FOR THE MASSES, BUT FOR THE FEW ONLY.

It is written in the pages of history how this felicity was marred, and marred speedily: the sumptuous palaces overthrown, the exquisite furniture in ashes, the ministers of pleasure dispersed or dead, the theatres and amphitheatres a dismal solitude; the civilisation dying away; the joys of it gone; and yet the religion of shame and sorrow living on, as though it had some principle of vitality lacking to the mighty world that was its foe. How was this? Or was it possible that the ascetics who crowded round the tombs of the martyrs were right after all, and He right who uttered the Beatitudes?

To such questionings the Christian can answer that for those who look closely, the religion of the cross is at the same time, and by virtue of that very cross, the religion of gladness; and again that the very joys of the old pagan world, and the analogous joys of the great centres of the modern world, require as the cost of their production a vast sum of unhappiness; while even for those who enjoy them the issue in the main is bitter disillusion and sorrow heaped on sorrow. Indeed we can turn on our accusers with a confident *tu quoque*, and say to them: It is not we but you that, judged by the measures of the higher statistics, are declared to be the authors and abettors of the world's woe.

For if we look back, for example, to the picture by St. Augustine, we shall see that first of all, as the very foundation of all pleasures, there was a vast mass of humanity who were not counted among the sharers. The Aristotelian doctrine that slavery was necessary to liberty, was distorted in a sense that Aristotle himself would have disavowed, and made the basis not of plain living and high thinking, but of licentious enjoyment. The boasted happiness of cheerful paganism was dependent on the life-long servitude of the majority of the people; and of the free portion the greater part lived in precarious and degrading dependence. It was man preyed on by man, *homo homini lupus*, in ex-

[1] "Poor whites" or "mean whites" is perhaps the best translation as opposed to "natives" or "coloured people".

[2] *De civitate Dei*, bk. ii., chap. xx.

treme contrast to the fraternal charity of those who were brothers in Christ.

And not in the Roman Empire alone, but everywhere and from the necessity of the case, an unchristian and worldly felicity (or seeming felicity) rests on a substratum of unhappiness. So in the midst of those passages given above from the Book of Wisdom we can read the significant avowal: "Let us oppress the poor man who is upright, let us not spare the widow, nor reverence the grey locks of the aged; but rather let our strength be our law of justice; for whatever is weak is to be adjudged as useless". Precisely, the weak, the poor, the vast multitude: not for their lip is the draught of pleasure, but amid sorrow and weariness to forge the cup and tread the wine-press for the gladness of the few.

35. DISILLUSION EVEN FOR THESE.

And then even among this few, even among the higher ranks of society and among their favourite freemen, we seek in vain for a life of happiness and contentment. Greek "blitheness" exists rather in the imagination of the poet Goethe than in the facts of history. For when we look closely, it is among the Christians, with all their asceticism, that we find blitheness and hope and peace, while gloom and melancholy dogged the footsteps of the heathen. A recent writer, all the better witness because the ways of Christian asceticism repel him, has set forth the disillusion, the sadness, the essential hopelessness of the heathen writers; the sorrow summed up in the Virgilian lines:—

Optima quaeque dies miseris mortalibus aevi
Prima fugit; subeunt morbi, tristisque senectus,
Et labor, et durae rapit inclementia mortis:

and how the later writers could only escape the note of utter sadness by ignoring all serious problems, and resting in a shallow and makeshift truth, that could not face the realities of life and offered to sorrowing souls neither consolation nor hope.[1]

The same truth of the joy of the Christians, the sadness of the pagans, had been previously set forth by an equally unsuspected witness, Walter Pater, in the exquisite tale of *Marius the Epicurean*. We see a world oppressed with the uncertainty and illusion of all philosophy; we learn the total insufficiency of Marcus Aurelius, from whose barren soil neither Christian joy could be drawn nor Christian charity. We seem to hear the wail of the Greek anthology: All is dust, all is ashes, all is nothingness. Not to know! O intolerable doubt, turning every banquet to bitterness, every melody to discord! Not to love! How then is life worth the while? Or if we may love, and seek therein our consolation, as the sweet-tongued After-Christian poet bids us:—

Ah, love, let us be true to one another! For the world
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain,

our consolation is ever dwindling away, as nearer we draw to the heartrending moment of an everlasting farewell:—

Atque in perpetuum frater ave atque vale.

Or if intoxicated with power and possession we would revel in the darkness, the dawn will draw from us the cry—not of the millions of Buddhists who, like other Fore-Christian peoples, believe and worship and pray, but—of philosophic Buddhism: All is transitory, all is misery, all is unreality; nor as we watch the loved one writhing in pain, is it of any avail to cry to heaven for pity and comfort: there is no heaven to hear.[2]

36. JOYFULNESS OF CHRISTIANITY.

But in extreme contrast to pessimism and disillusion, all gloom is an alien and enemy in Christian hearts. If Christianity is the religion of sorrow, it is also, and pre-eminently, the religion of joy; the solution of this antinomy being that Christianity is the religion of love, and that in this world love and sorrow are linked by a mysterious partnership. Now Christian asceticism is no superstitious pain-worship, no offering to some pain-loving deity, some evil principle opposed to the good, as though life and health were not God's good gifts; nor again has it aught in common, except sometimes the outward show, with the proud self-righteousness of the Hindu ascetic or Moslem dervish. Much rather Christian asceticism is a form of love; and love being the root of joy, it follows that Christian joyfulness is not in spite of asceticism but its consequence. We are taught as

[1] T. R. Glover, *Life and Letters in the Fourth Century*, 1901; see especially p. 248.

[2] *Cf.* C. J. Forbes, *British Burma*, 1878; Dr. Flint, *Antitheistic Theories*, 1879, Lect. vii.

an elementary truth that man is on earth for the one end of perfecting himself in the love of God. This is his purpose and probation. But only through labour, pain and suffering is love perfected. Christianity then has no mission to eliminate labour, pain and suffering from this world (*pati et perpeti humanum est* wrote Leo XIII.), but to transmute them. They can be the means whereby we can obtain the subjection of the lower selfish life and of greedy individualism; the suppression of false self-assertion and of blind nature before the law of reason and of God. Christianity is frankly "the religion of suffering, of mortification, of self-sacrifice, of consuming love, of self-forgetting zeal, of self-crucifying union . . . the religion of the Cross and the Crucified."[1] Joyous abandonment, generous self-sacrifice, these are the watchwords, and to become living images of the Divine Model of whom it is written that He pleased not Himself.

To preserve then, and to express, and to intensify our love are the functions of Christian asceticism, from the lowest stages of the all-needful struggle against rebellious nature and against supernatural antagonists, to the highest flights of mystical union of chosen souls who know Christ only and Him crucified; thus ranging from the fight for freedom to the liberty of holiness. And the common issue is joy. Nay the joyful serenity of the athletes of Christ has often appeared scandalous merriment; and the lightheartedness of true Christian populations cannot be crushed by economic or political oppression. And no wonder, when the Gospel has proclaimed the Grand Charter of true emancipation: "Blessed are the poor, the mourners, the sick, the oppressed, the persecuted". No wonder again, when the Christian family with its restraint and its sweetness, and the double strength it gives to all holy natural affections, is for the vast multitude of Christians a perennial fountain of gladness.

And while we see around us the After-Christian world grow daily more terrified at pain and suffering, throwing a veil of euphemism over the stern realities of disease, grasping at every anodyne, shrinking from self-discipline and self-denial, the Christians can say with simple confidence *in Cruce salus*. This principle is for them a source of strength and victory, while the others are involved in a principle of irremediable weakness.

[1] Faber, *Growth in Holiness*, chap. iv.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHURCH AND THE STATE.

37. NATIONALISM EVER A TROUBLE TO CHRISTIANITY.

We have counted as the fourth antinomy, that the Church appears the opponent and yet the support of the State; its rival and yet its ally.

The antagonism of Church and State is derived principally from two of the characteristics of the Church, her cosmopolitanism and her autonomy; she is both international and independent.

It was the very mission of Christianity from the beginning to break down the barriers that separated Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian, Roman and Scythian; and thereby to come into conflict with the strongest sentiments of natural man. "There is nothing men more pride themselves in than birth, for this very reason that it is irrevocable; it can neither be given to those who have it not, nor taken away from those who have."[1] It is conspicuous among barbarous tribes: "The meanest and most ignorant of the Tartars preserve with conscious pride the inestimable treasure of their genealogy, and, whatever distinctions of rank may have been introduced by the unequal distribution of pastoral wealth, they mutually respect themselves and each other as the descendants of the first founder of the tribe".[2] But the sense of racial superiority is far from being confined to barbarians. The Jews of old, conscious of inalienable superiority of birth, looked on Roman and Greek, Syrian and Egyptian with ineffable arrogance and scorn. And as the world in their view was divided into Jew and Gentile, so to Greek eyes into Greeks and barbarians. A similar national pride is cherished among the leading and active nations of modern civilisation, and their sense of superiority and their contempt of the foreigner,

[1] *Lectures on the Turks*, Lect. iv.

[2] Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. xxvi.

whether latent or expressed, is generally in proportion to their temporal success. The French as *la grande nation* were long held a stock example of national vanity. Among ourselves the old men who remember England of the forties and fifties in the nineteenth century can testify to the scorn of the ignorant, backward, unwashed, ill-governed foreigner, the absolute conviction of the utter superiority of the English Constitution and manners. And similar national prejudices are seen to this day.[1] Nor are such feelings a harmless and laughable weakness. Alas! the world is full of all too earnest racial antagonism. There is scarce a country great or small, that is not troubled with bitter strife of language and colour, outward and unmistakable signs abused by a perversity, at once human and inhuman, to separate those who should be brothers in Christ.

38. BUT REGULATED NOT IGNORED BY THE CHURCH.

Such separation is abhorrent to the Christian Church; national pride, like all other pride, can only expect her condemnation; she warns us that the last may be first, and the first last; gives us the example from her annals that though for a time some favoured countries and nations may be her peculiar territory and home, none are secure of that fair possession, but by an awe-striking and inscrutable Providence may see it pass to others. And far from being bound to race or caste, the Church is like a new nationality, above the little nationalities of Government, geography and blood, a heavenly nation with its own uncircumscribed territory, its own visible government, its own peculiar laws and universal jurisdiction.

But this very universality that prevents the Church from being appropriated by any one nationality and narrowed to the mind, the ways of thought, or the predilections of any one, ever exposes her to danger of being regarded as an alien by all. She cannot be national because she is universal; and her exalted character of the one holy Catholic Church, the Bride and Mystical Body of the one Christ, makes the notion of a national Catholic Church a contradiction in terms.

For thus upholding in its integrity the religion of reason, refusing the support of false pretences, of national pride and blind fanaticism, she must pay the penalty. It was more than the Jews could bear to hear, even from their own Scriptures, how there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elias, yet to none was he sent, but rather to a widow of Sidon; and many lepers in Israel in the days of Eliseus, yet none healed, but rather Naaman the Syrian. And perverted nationalism[2] has continued a repeated source of trouble, from the complaints of undue preference to Jewish over Greek widows narrated in the Acts, or the opposition of the native Egyptians to the Greek settlers in the fifth century, down to the struggle between Bohemian and German or between Hungarian and Croatian in our own day.

But is then nationality to be ignored and all nations treated as though they were identical? Not so; for this would be to deny the providential distinction of nations each bound to use its special character for the glory of the Most High, and would be to deny the fitness of the Church to deal with each. All alike must be addressed, but each addressed in its own peculiar way, nor any rigid uniformity preserved of outward expression. For indeed the fashions of speech and action vary so much with race and nation, that what would imply evil in the one, say falsehood or irreverence, implies no evil in the other; not that the principles of morals vary geographically, but the significance of externals; and thus each man feels, and feels rightly, that a foreigner is no judge of his conduct, and lacks the subtle appreciation needed for a fair estimate. But the Church, precisely because in one sense she is a foreigner to all, is a foreigner to none; and brings with her not only the general graces needed for all, but also the particu-

[1] See the comic literature of the time, and even the serious; such books as Samuel Laing's series, *Notes of a Traveller*, with their blind scorn of the students and professors of Germany. To-day it is rather among the Germans themselves, whose ruler applauds them as the salt of the earth, that we see national vanity; or among the Americans to whom it is indisputable that among all nations they are the first.

[2] The word "nationalism" has two senses, one the effort to prevent absorption by another nationality, as the efforts of the Poles, Flemings, Catalonians and Finns, lest they be absorbed by the German, French, Spanish and Russian nationalities; against which efforts the Church has no word to say. The other sense, which is anti-Christian, is to put country or race before the law of God and the dictates of charity, and to adhere to a religion not because it is true, but because it is national.

lar grace needed to correct the particular form of human corruption prominent in the natural character of each nation; ministering as a common source of grace to each varied necessity. Unity is her mark: unification her work: by nature the members of the Church are not one and would not become one; yet in the essentials of their faith, their devotions, and their moral ideas, she makes them one.

And thus evil once more, as it only exists for the sake of good, has to yield to good; and the struggle of nationalities, that is ever a trouble to the Church and a difficulty, becomes the witness of her unifying powers, and the very material of her triumph.

39. CHURCH AUTONOMY OPPOSED TO THE STATE.

But the complaint of the State or civil power against the Christian Church has not been merely that she refuses to be national, but that she claims an influence and independence that seem to overpass all limits. An international society that only taught some obscure doctrines of no practical import, could be left undisturbed in its obscurity. But here was a definite message to all mankind on the gravest of truths; here was a definite body that came to set right and to govern the world; here too were no empty claims, but the visible obedience to this alien power by all classes of men. "If the Church is independent of the State, so far as she is a messenger from God, therefore should the State with its high officials and its subject masses, come into her communion, it is plain that they must at once change hostility into submission. There was no middle term; either they must deny her claim to divinity or humble themselves before it, that is as far as the domain of religion extends, and that domain is a wide one. They could not place God and man on one level."[1] For the mightiest warlord, the most keen-witted legislator, there was no exemption from obedience.

Such a Church with such claims has ever been, and if from God, ought ever to be, in conflict with the civil power; and the acuteness of the conflict has shown incessant variation. The unregenerate civil power of ancient Rome held the Christians to be a rebel people, a nefarious conspiracy, men of a desperate faction; and looked on the Church as intolerant, engrossing, tending to a new modelling of society, breaking laws, dividing families, introducing unsettlement and discord into the social and political world; an organised body closely welded together and holding all outside its pale as rebels or misbelievers, itself grasping at paramount influence and control.[2]

And not merely in the days of unregenerate paganism, but ever since, and in proportion to their unregeneracy, the rulers of this world have watched the Church with untiring jealousy, and under the decent mask of civil obedience have upheld the principles of ecclesiastical servitude known in recent centuries as Erastianism or Cæsarism. And she, for all their watching, has upheld her great tradition of Apostolic independence and freedom of speech, and has continued to give her message to the world, and her testimony, whatever the consequence, in behalf of the moral and revealed law from the far distant days of Athanasius, of Chrysostom, or of Pope Martin against the Emperors of the East, onwards to the struggle for liberty against Henry IV. of Germany, or John of England, or Philip the Fair of France; onwards again to the nefarious conspiracies of the Bourbon Courts and Joseph II. in the eighteenth century, and the treacherous Napoleon who followed in their evil track, even down to the days our own eyes have seen, when Ledochowski of Posen, Eberhard of Treves, Melchers of Cologne, and Mermillod of Geneva were in bonds or banishment. Truly the Church can say with the Psalmist: I spoke of Thy testimonies even before kings, and I was not ashamed.

40. YET THE CHURCH THE PROP OF THE STATE.

Nevertheless this very Church that seems to the powers of the world so unwelcome an intruder, is found on closer scrutiny to be their very stay and support. As she herself sings on the Epiphany:—

> Crudelis Herodes, Deum
> Regem venire quid times?
> Non eripit mortalia,
> Qui regna dat caelestia.

The fear of her is an idle fear; she robs not kings and magistrates of their earthly crowns by putting a heavenly crown within their reach; and Cæsar will receive his own with tenfold security, if to God are rendered the things that are God's.

[1] *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, p. 24.

[2] See the accumulation of passages given in the *Development of Christian Doctrine*, chap. vi., § 1.

This conclusion that is a seeming paradox is reached in the following manner: It is true that Christianity as the religion of reason and the religion of civilisation has so far produced discord, that it disallows a union based on fable; will not suffer a brotherhood based on common descent from a demigod; invites the scrutiny of enlightened reason; dissipates those objects of imagination, such as a Divine dynasty, that are the bond of a barbarous state; renders impossible the peace and stability of stagnation by introducing a dynamic force; restrains us by no superstitious fears from exploring to our utmost the earth, the sea and the very stars; but yet in all this merely does what reason and civilisation without any religion would have done in any case; only does more. For they, having made a clean sweep of picturesque illusion and serviceable fanaticism, leave a *tabula rasa*, a bare smooth surface, whereon no principle of union can find a hold. True, there is the recommendation to maintain law and order, to secure complete protection to property, person and health. But what heart is stirred or conscience moved by such a recommendation? And this sober appeal to self-interest loses the very appearance of reasonableness when addressed to those who lack property to be protected or an easy life to be made secure. The antique loyalty may have been incompatible with reasonable political science:

> I once had sons, but now hae nane;
> I bred them toiling sairly,
> And I wad bear them a' again,
> And lose them a' for Charlie.

But is the voice of reason and civilisation in the first letter of Junius of any value as a practical substitute? "Loyalty in the heart and understanding of an Englishman is a rational attachment to the guardian of the laws." We need some better principle of union than this, some stronger basis of law and order; and we can find it in the teaching of the Christian Church on unity and obedience. For knowing that union in belief and thought is the only lasting basis of union in action, she lays the greatest stress on unity of faith, and expressly teaches the superior efficacy and dignity of public prayer and worship over private; we are dearer to God when in union with others. Instead of admitting a disruptive individualism, each one living for himself in self-seeking isolation, the Church binds us together by the doctrine of corporate merit and corporate guilt, of vicarious suffering and atonement, of mankind linked together for weal or woe. True individualism indeed was upheld, almost created, by the Catholic doctrine of the absolute and ineffaceable value of the individual soul, to whom as an individual were administered the Sacraments, and for whom an individual judgment was in store. But individualism in this sense was in no opposition to each man being in his special place amid order and subordination, knit by a thousand ties to his fellow-men. No doubt, in the eighteenth century a theory arose that the maximum of public good would arise from each man seeking unhindered his own ends without any regard for the public weal. But the bitter experience of the waste of national resources, the waste of lives and goods (already described in the second chapter), is the best reply to the imagined harmony of private self-aggrandisement and public weal. Indeed in its acute form this reckless egoism appears as revolt on the one side, and tyranny on the other, both of them lawless, both of them self-seeking, both of them in extreme opposition to Christian teaching that we should seek not our own things but the things of Christ.

41. MAKING OBEDIENCE AND GOVERNMENT EASY.

And this same teaching takes, so to speak, the sting out of obedience. Where reason has dissolved the charm that threw a halo round authority, and we meet all unveiled a mere man, advanced in years, not quick to hear or see, unwieldy in body, eager for choice food, narrow in mind—there is a difficulty in obeying him; or again if, being ourselves grave with age and dignity, we are called on to obey an inexperienced stripling. But reasonable religion replaces the veil of awe that simple reason had been compelled to remove. There is no power, it tells us, but from God: by Him kings reign and princes decree justice. Earthly power, in the sense of lawful authority, is a fragment borrowed from the plenitude of Him who said of Himself: "All power is given to Me in Heaven and on earth". To resist the earthly power is therefore to resist the ordinance of God. And thus again, it is not the person—not the frail man encompassed with infirmities—but the office, the authority, of which God's authority is the archetype, that we revere and obey. The man set

over us may be our inferior by many degrees in all mental and physical gifts; but beside him stands one who in all things is our superior not by degrees but by infinitude.

So it comes about that the Church is the stay and support of temporal rulers against anarchic individualism. It is not a loss to them but a gain to be stripped of seeming power by the Christian maxim, We must obey God rather than man; when the second Christian maxim, All power is from God, makes solid alike the presidential chair or royal throne. And this all the more because by its teaching on the duty of labour and the sanctity of family life, Christianity provides a stock of numerous families trained in the laws of obedience and self-restraint, and taught as connected duties to fear God and honour the King. Whereas an idle, critical, lax, unprincipled, unhomeloving crowd, to whom it appears the better the less there is of authority and direction, and having as watchword that every man please himself—it is this After-Christian crowd, untaught the principle of obedience or having unlearnt it, and not the Christian Church, that is the danger to order and to government.

The science of politics is full of difficulty, its doctrines obscure, its precepts in many points disputable. But on one point there seems agreement, that the constitutional forms of any government are of little moment compared with the character of the men on whom devolves their working. Now the Church, by her own declaration, is indifferent to forms of government;[1] but she is a coefficient in producing the character of men, and profoundly interested in the product. And this being so, we can repeat the ancient answer of St. Augustine: "Let those who say that the doctrine of Christ is adverse to the State . . . let them show us an army of soldiers such as the doctrine of Christ has commanded them to be, let them show us such governors of provinces, such husbands and wives, such parents and children, such masters and servants, such kings, such judges, as the Christian teaching would have them to be, nay such contributors of all manner of taxes and such gatherers of taxes; and then let them have the face, if they can, to call this teaching injurious to the State".[2]

And the same teacher who has cited this ancient apologia, tells us, not that the British flag (or some other flag) is for the prudent citizen a commercial asset of fluctuating value, and to be treated accordingly; but rather tells us that Christians are bound by the very law of nature (or rule of right reason) to love and cherish their native land, even to being ready as good citizens to sacrifice their very lives for her from whom they have received the use of this mortal life; and that of this natural love of earthly country the author and the cause is God.[3]

[1] See for example the encyclical *Immortale Dei*, issued by Leo XIII. in 1885.

[2] *Epist.* 138, "ad Marcellinum," appositely cited in the encyclical *Immortale Dei*.

[3] Encyclical *Sapientiæ Christianiæ* of 1890. *Cf.* the delightful chapter on "Instinct de la patrie" in Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme*, part i., bk. v., ch. xiv.

CHAPTER V.

THE SOCIAL QUESTION.

42. MEANING OF DIVERSITY OF WEALTH AND SERVICE.

We have counted as the fifth antinomy, that the Church upholds the equality of man and yet the inequality of property and power.

The inequalities of social position are a chronic difficulty to philosophers, a periodical difficulty to statesmen: not indeed that one man should be wealthy and in command, another man poor and subordinate; for this might seem the fair result of the competence of the one and the incompetence of the other; but that one man should start life with an equipment of wealth and education, another uneducated and penniless. This difficulty was augmented during the nineteenth century by various economic theories which, in their efforts to answer socialism, obscured the nature of inequality. Adam Smith had understood it and expressed it clearly: that a man is rich or poor according to the quantity of the labour of other people which he can command or which he can afford to hire;[1] that "wherever there is great property there is great inequality. For one very rich man there

[1] *Wealth of Nations*, bk. i., chap. v.

must be at least 500 poor, and the affluence of the few supposes the indigence of the many."[1] The fact indeed was a commonplace. The only meaning of a family rising above the general level of poor labouring men was that for that family others were working, others in part or wholly its servants. And an increase in such service is of the very essence of every rise through the multitudinous grades of the middle class to the higher ranks of the professional and military classes (the Aristotelian μέσοι) till we reach the man of "independent means" who enjoys at leisure the ministrations of his domestic servants, and the produce of his industrial servants in the shape of his rents, dividends and interest. Without servants he could neither receive nor enjoy his income.[2]

Let this much explain the nature of hereditary inequality; its justification, speaking broadly, is its necessity for civilisation. "Mankind," said Dr. Johnson, "are happier in a state of inequality and subordination. . . All would be losers if all were to work for all; they would have no intellectual improvement. All intellectual improvement arises from leisure; all leisure arises from one working for another."[3]

The same truth was expressed by Aristotle in the seeming paradox that "slavery" is a necessity for "liberty". For by Aristotelian slavery we may understand subordination and service of the great majority; and by Aristotelian liberty we may understand the intellectual cultivation and social and political rule of the comparatively few: the condition, and the necessary condition of highly civilised States in the time of Aristotle, and of Dr. Johnson, and of ourselves.

But this is not the whole truth. How comes it that our own times are filled with the attempted solutions of the problem of inequality, and that Aristotle himself is confused and hesitating on the institutions of his time that we call slavery? How comes it that two minds so radically opposed as Adam Smith the free-thinker and Dr. Johnson the Christian, are both alike, with mid-eighteenth century conditions before them, so tranquil and so clear?

The answer here, as so often, is only to be gained by looking to history. Now the point of importance is not whether we find great inequality of wealth from childhood upwards or whether we find (what is the same thing in other words) the great bulk of the people acting as servants and providers of rent and interest for comparatively few; for this is a common feature of civilisation. The real point of importance is how the inequality is organised, what are the personal relations between the master and his servants, the employer and his workmen, the landlord and his tenants. These relations on a broad view of history are principally four. Two of them, where the servants are permanently bound, differ between themselves fundamentally according to whether the service is limited and the masters bound by serious obligations, or whether the service is unlimited and the masters not bound; the first to be called *serfdom*, the second *slavery*. The two remaining relations of service have in common that their duration is limited and their origin a contract; they differ in whether the conditions of contract are or are not seriously regulated by law, custom or other combination. Both are called *free service*, or a state of freedom, in contrast to serfdom or slavery; but no particular term has been adopted to distinguish whether they are regulated or unregulated, except the misleading antithesis of customary and competitive.

The notions expressed by the words poor and rich, servant and master, bond and free, are mere skeletons till clothed in the flesh of concrete circumstance and shown in actual examples. We cannot even take for granted that "slaves" still less "serfs," are in a worse economic condition than "free" workmen. It is only a presumption which in any particular case may have to be withdrawn.[4]

[1] *Wealth of Nations*, bk. v., chap. i., part ii.

[2] Mr. Charles Booth divides the population of London into 80·1 per cent. who keep no (domestic) servants, 11·3 who keep them, 4·9 who are themselves servants, and 3·7 who are inmates of institutions. But as in nearly half the cases of servant-keeping one person waits on four or more, while in less than a tenth of the cases the servants equal or exceed the number of those they serve; we may reckon roughly a serving class of 85 per cent., an intermediate class of 10·3 per cent. and a commanding class of only 1 per cent., the rest being inmates of institutions.—*Life and Labour in London*, vol. v., ed. 1895.

[3] Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, ii., p. 207, edit. Napier.

[4] Thus in mid-nineteenth century "free" negroes in Barbadoes were not in a better but in a worse condition than the contemporary "slave" negroes in Brazil; the Russian "serfs" in 1850 were not in a worse but in a better condition than in 1900 when they were "free".

43. RECOGNITION OF SLAVERY BY THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Now precisely in the great world-empire, where Christianity was first preached, the prevailing conditions of service were those of unmitigated slavery; the slaves were bereft of country, of family, of a proper name, of marriage; any child of theirs was at law without kith or kin; they existed only for the benefit of the master who could maltreat them even to death, and separate or sell them as he pleased.

To this condition the great civilised world of Greece and Rome had sunk when Christ was born.

No doubt there were many examples of affection and devotion on the part of slaves towards their masters; no doubt kind treatment and emancipation were common; nor strange when we remember that the offices of tutor, private secretary, librarian, and medical man, were frequently fulfilled by slaves. But all honest friendliness rested on the good pleasure of the master, and the law was a perpetual incitement to the indulgence of every evil passion.

Was slavery declared by the new religion to be unlawful? Or was it approved? Or was there silence concerning this most unhappy form in which the necessary inequality of civilisation had, in this particular civilisation, taken shape?

Slavery was not left in silence, was not declared unlawful; was recognised rather as a great fact, as part of the structure of society. It was no external emancipation that Christianity proclaimed; nay, from the Sermon on the Mount and the Epistles of St. Paul onwards, the reiterated teaching was: Obey, submit, serve your masters most diligently, even the harsh and evil tempered; be glad of humiliations; be mindful that for your sake the Lord of Heaven took on Himself the form of a slave; and rejoice in poverty that was the very condition chosen by Him after whose way you should walk. Indeed a passage in St. Paul (1 Cor. vii. 21) was considered by some of the Fathers as a recommendation to remain a slave even if the opportunity arose of being emancipated;[1] and Christian slaves were expressly warned not to make light of Christian masters because of their community of faith (1 Tim. vi. 2). Nay, the Christian Church cast forth from her pale the Eustathians of Cappadocia, who refused the title of Christian to all slave-owners; and cast forth the Circumcellians of Africa, who urged the slaves to revolt, and the Ebionites who exaggerated into temporal equality the spiritual equality of Christianity, and the Carpocratians who taught a doctrine akin to the extremer forms of modern socialism.

The early Church then made no attempt at a social revolution, suffered the terms of service and distribution of property to remain unaltered, and might be thought to have left in heretical hands the charge of emancipation.

44. YET THE CHURCH THE VERY SOUL OF EMANCIPATION.

Nevertheless the same Church that by her glorification of poverty, obedience and humiliation might seem the very buttress of slavery, and of the social order of the great world of Rome and Greece, was all the while preparing the way for a radical transformation. And this not by mere words—many and beautiful were the words of pagan poets and philosophers on the natural equality and dignity of man, from Plautus and Cicero to Juvenal, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. The Christians too, when they had gained the freedom of their literary voice, had passages no less eloquent, such as we can read in the institutes of Lactantius or the Scripture commentaries of St. Gregory of Nyssa. But long before her children could be eloquent the Church worked a work for which no mere eloquence could avail; and having within herself a force that could change the heart, she began at her very outset the great and immediate work of freeing her children from the slavery to passion and sin, an internal emancipation compared to which the external and legal emancipation was but a small thing, and could be left, according to external conditions, leisurely to follow. The poor slaves, hitherto with no will and, so to speak, with no soul and conscience of their own, were once more made men by Christianity; and while in all else their obedience was quickened, they were totally exempt from the obedience that implied immorality or injustice. The sacred words, We must obey God rather than man, applied to the social and domestic sphere no less than to the political. The Christian master, though he could still command, and indeed with more efficacy than before, because the

[1] See *Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Sociali*, Rome, October, 1904, pp. 169, 170, in the series of articles by S. Talamo based on the available texts and entitled "La Schiavitù secondo i Padri della Chiesa".

Christian slave was bound by a new and moral obligation, yet could command only with limitations, lest the law of God be broken; and besides this negative limit, was bound by the positive obligation to minister to the spiritual welfare of his slaves, or to be as one who had denied the faith and was worse than an unbeliever. Thus the obligation became two-sided; the very essence of slavery was dissolved; those who served a Christian master became as bondservants or serfs; and in spite of the letter of the Roman law and the jurisprudence of its exponents, were no longer slaves.

Further, the great wall built of scorn and abjection, the cruel word of a high unchristian civilisation was thrown down by the fraternity and equality of Christian worship, master and slave sharing it alike, equal before God,[1] with the same religious duties, partaking of the same august sacraments and divine mysteries, alike able to be raised (the slave after emancipation) to be a priest or bishop, even Bishop of Rome (as St. Calixtus), nay to reach the highest of all glories and to be numbered among the saints. In fact, a whole army of martyrs were mere slaves of whom the names have mostly been lost, but some few preserved;[2] and on the anniversary of the martyr's death (*natalitia*) the pious crowd knelt round the tomb, though it was but the tomb of a slave.

Moreover, the honour and obligation of labour, rendering it worthy of a freedman; the prohibition of the exposure of children, a practice that had supplied a recruiting ground for the slave-speculator, who reared the children (*alumni*) for slavery; the adoption of foundlings to be reared in freedom; the bloom of institutions from the fourth century for widows and orphans, captives and debtors, sick and poverty-stricken; and various laws of Christian Emperors, hesitating indeed and slow, but by the time of Justinian fairly impressed with Christian influence —all were factors in the change from slavery to a condition partly of free labour and partly of serfdom. And then, in the Teutonic kingdoms of the West, the Church had to engage in a long struggle to prevent the renewal of the old abuses of slavery, such as unpunished homicide, removal far from home, and commercial slave trading. And gradually as the sense of man's dignity, being the participator in the divine nature, exercised its force, as well as the sense of Christian fraternity, it came to be seen that, at least for those races long in the fold, there was something incongruous in the life-long subordination of serfdom; and the manumission of serfs, though not imposed on their masters as a duty, was recommended as among the works known theologically as meritorious.

The same dignity of man made it meritorious to provide all with the means of intellectual culture. The Church, by her own simple yet sublime teaching, imparted to all her children a training that in a sense can be called philosophical; by the history of her saints she put before them examples of heroic virtue; by the beauty of her ritual she provided a means of æsthetic culture for the poorest, so that the peasant, even if illiterate, was not uncultured. But she went further and urged the provision of literary training even for the poorest; and so effectively that our England could show cathedral, monastery, and collegiate schools together with hospital, guild, chantry, and independent schools, till they were destroyed, mostly without any educational substitute, during the spoliations under Henry VIII. and Edward VI. Nor was hers the policy that opposed teaching the American negroes to read and to write.

45. MODERN LABOUR PROBLEMS AND SOCIALISM.

Although the inequality necessary to civilisation implies a certain chronic antagonism between the classes of society, it is only from time to time that the antagonism becomes acute, either from widespread abuse of property and power;[3] or secondly, from revolutionary religious changes[4] or the slow decay of religion,[5] whereby the ground is weakened

[1] In the Christian catacombs the word *servus*, in the sense of slave to another, is scarcely if ever found on an inscription, and the word *libertus* (freedman) rarely, though both are very common on pagan inscriptions.

[2] See the chapter, "Les Esclaves Martyrs," in Paul Allard, *Les Esclaves Chrétiens*. Some of the most famous were women slaves, like St. Blandina of Lyons in the second century and St. Felicitas in Africa.

[3] So at the time of the Gracchi, and later of the slave revolt under Spartacus.

[4] So to the Peasants' War in Germany after the preaching of Luther.

[5] So in many Greek towns, Corinth among them, as described by Polybius in the second and third centuries B.C.

on which rests the acquiescence in service and inequality; or thirdly, from a combination of these causes.

Such a combination has been the cause in the nineteenth century of the grave dissension, known in many countries as the labour question or social question; and though not co-extensive with the growth of After-Christian populations, yet stands with it in close and frequent connection.

The industrial revolution, that began in England, spread afterwards to Europe, and later to America, showed as its first-fruits the collection of vast bodies of workpeople to take part in the new methods of production, the displacement of many of the workers on the old methods, and the dissolution of the former organisation of master and servant. Free labour regulated had given place to free labour unregulated; and though the legal conditions of service were totally unlike those of the classical Roman Empire, there was a sinister likeness in the practical abuse of irresponsible power. For before the law intervened or workmen's associations became effective, a large proportion of workmen found themselves forced to accept any condition of work, however hard, in order to live; and forced to see their women and children exposed defenceless to cruelty and demoralisation such as Europe had not witnessed for fifteen hundred years.

One government after another has attempted to adjust the law to the new circumstances; and new codes of workmen's legislation have sprung up on all sides—factory laws, workmen's insurance, laws on mines, merchant shipping, education and public health. In some countries, conspicuously in Germany, a large part of the evils due to the industrial revolution have been remedied by legislation. In others, conspicuously in England, legislation has been assisted or supplemented by workmen's associations. But in no country has a remedy been found for the new evil of an ever-increasing proportion of the people being compelled, themselves to live and their children to be reared, no longer in the open country, but in the physical congestion and moral contagion of great cities. Nor with the examples of Germany, Great Britain, France and America before us, dare we affirm that even the best of labour legislation will ensure contentment, or that associations will be efficacious for those most in need of it, or not be perverted, from being a bulwark against oppression and a means of conciliation, to become a promoter of discord. And then the adoption by masters and men of After-Christian doctrines and negations have widely weakened, politically and socially, the notions of reverence, duty, obedience to superiors, submission to Providence; so that often those with the least cause of complaint are the least content.

The word Socialism is often used in a loose sense to express any effort to prevent or to mitigate the evils of industrial life; and in this sense all social endeavour of Christian and After-Christian, of Jew or Fore-Christian, to make better the condition of workmen would be called forms of socialism; and every Christian almost *ex vi termini* would be a socialist. But this use of the term deprives it of all scientific value. It is wiser to confine it to those theories that have in common the wish to abolish rather than amend inequality and service, and thus make an end of income from interest, rent and dividends. This proposed abolition of "unearned income" became, by the brilliant reasoning of Karl Marx,[1] a terror to the holders of property and power, many of whom were conscious of their dubious title to the possessions called their own. And just as in the early centuries of Christian history we find various heretical bodies teaching the unlawfulness of service or of inequality, their doctrine made specious because of the abuses of slavery —or just as the abuses of the new West European refinement and enrichment of

[1] The critics of Karl Marx generally miss the main point, and fix attention on his teaching that value is congealed labour, and that history is wholly the result of economic forces. To overthrow Marx on these points is to leave socialism as strong as ever. One opponent indeed, Dr. Menger, bravely faces the issue, and states the problem or iniquity of "unearned income" (*arbeitsloses Einkommen*) as plainly as Marx himself. But then he makes all rights to farm-rents, ground-rents, house-rents, annuities, rent-charges, royalties, dividends, interest from mortgages, from government or municipal stock, or from any kind of loan—all this "unearned income" to rest, not on any principle of justice, but on the slippery basis of positive law. And his is merely another way of saying *beati possidentes* or Might makes Right. See the English translation of *The Right to the Whole Produce of Labour*, edited in 1899 by Prof. Foxwell, who himself takes the Christian standpoint that humanity and justice are needful accompaniments of property.

the twelfth century gave plausibility to the heretical socialism of the Poor Men of Lyons and the Fraticelli, the unorthodox perverters of Franciscan social reform—or just as in the fourteenth century the abuses of decaying chivalry and uprising legalism gave some show of justice to the anarchical Lollards—so in these days various unorthodox Christian bodies, appalled by the social evils that surround them, unlit by any beacon, uncertain in their principles, are ready to forbid rent and interest, and fondly think that in opposing hereditary inequality they are repeating to the modern world the genuine teaching of the Christian Fathers, nay of Christ Himself.

46. JUSTICE BUT NOT EQUALITY UPHELD.

It is otherwise with the Church to whom those teachings are secured and made plain by a Divine illumination; who, when the due time has come, will apply her old principles to the new situation. To meet ancient slavery she had taught that the mere inequality of wealth was not to blame, nor the necessity of service, but the misuse of wealth and the misuse of service. In like manner she proclaimed in the nineteenth century no levelling of inequalities, no abolition of domestic or industrial service, no prohibition of rents, or dividends, or any form of non-usurious interest. St. Paul's exhortations have been followed almost to the letter; the same emphasis laid on patience, obedience, submission, fidelity; the same disapproval of violence, of confiscation, of revolt. But then the modern Church, like the ancient, has been equally emphatic on the duties of Christian masters and men of wealth, and on the duties (of no practical import in St. Paul's time) of the Christian State.[1]

Strict justice, we are taught, forbids all evil enrichment; forbids overreaching one's neighbour in business; forbids unfair prices, whether to the ruin of competitors or to the injury of purchasers; forbids secret commissions, frauds on the exchanges, and all forms of the ever-renewed evil of usury, of which the unwearied condemnations by the Church marks her as the watchful protector of the weak. Strict justice moreover in the relation of employer and employed, forbids underpay or underwork, or misuse of weak age or sex for unsuitable tasks, or exposing them to immoral or unsanitary influences, or doing injury to the home life of those employed.

Now matters of strict justice fall within the province of the State; and no Christian government worthy of the name would suffer these evils to endure, without some effort to abate them; but would rather aim at securing in the teeth of sophistical economists and interested obstructors the prevalence of fair rents, fair interest, fair wages, fair prices, fair taxes—in short, society transfused with justice.

Nor is the plea available that a man can do what he will with his own; "own" implies justice, and for ownership to be perverted to injustice is to cut at the root of its justification.

Nor again is the plea of free contract available, and the right of individual bargaining. Extremes meet, and the individualist demand for unrestricted contract is akin to the socialist demand for universal equality. Both rest on the supposition that men are mere atoms fortuitously meeting with no relevant antecedents; when in fact they are already parts of a social organisation, and already involved in a network of rights and duties. No contract is valid that involves either party in a neglect of their duties or makes them partakers of injustice. No laws of property are to be approved that would separate utterly the fortunes of parents and children, remove parental responsibility and put the children of the idle, the drunken and the profligate on a par with the children of the upright. Both the individualist and socialist position alike presuppose no previous family union, no link of native land, no bonds of citizenship and association, and are adapted to a yet untried society where not merely the waifs and strays but the whole population would be reared in a cosmopolitan foundling-house, and, as far as legitimate union and offspring were concerned, would live and die wifeless and childless. So both theories can be dismissed as unhistorical.

47. SOCIAL REFORM COMBINED WITH MORAL.

Further, we are taught by the Church that those in power should promote association and ownership among the

[1] See in general the *Acta Leonis XIII.*, and in particular the four encyclicals *Arcanum Divinæ* of 1880, *Immortale Dei* of 1885, *Sapientiæ Christianæ* of 1890, and *Rerum Novarum* of 1891. These are collected in *The Pope and the People*, Catholic Truth Society, price 1s.

masses of the people as the two pillars of their welfare; so that instead of being like a heap of shifting sand or grain in bulk, they may be bound in cohesion by multitudinous unions according to trade and locality, and given easy access to a hundred forms of property and insurance; a guard moreover being set lest they be robbed directly or indirectly of the fruit on the root of their sobriety and toil.

Finally, the old teaching of the Christian Fathers has been uttered anew, on the duties of charity, on the moral responsibilities of the rich, on the blessing of almsgiving; and we may repeat with Lactantius after sixteen centuries, that if justice is the basis of society, the bond thereof is compassion (*misericordia vel humanitas*). The rich and powerful and cultured are to spend on the less richly endowed classes not mere money but themselves. For the social question is much more than a money question, and no code of laws, however wise, can provide all that is needful for fruitful reform. Nay, the chief thing needful would be missing; *intra animum medendum est.* There must be interior reformation, without which neither workmen's insurance, nor factory laws, nor continuation schools, nor public baths and libraries, nor abundant leisure, nor high wages, nor short hours of work, nor cheap and sanitary dwellings, nor allotments and small holdings, nor light and equable taxation, will avail for social peace. All these are good things and desirable; but their efficacy is neutralised if those who enjoy them become entangled in the toils of After-Christian corruption. Nature not grace prevails, and a double pestilence, the greed for wealth and the thirst for pleasure, makes men poor in the midst of abundance, breaking up homes, setting neighbours at variance, making men like the beasts who prey on one another. Then is forfeited man's noblest prerogative to dwell together in unity; and by a process the very reverse of Christian asceticism, they who seek their life lose it, and the tree of happiness they have planted brings forth ashes as its fruit.

Thus the Church amid externals of which almost every feature has changed, repeats the same message that she delivered by the voice of Paul or Chrysostom; proclaims the all-importance of the spiritual life of man; bids us first seek the Kingdom of God and His justice; and then, that all things else shall be added to us, stands as the peacemaker between warring classes, between the embittered slaves and irresponsible masters of the Roman Empire, between the feudal lords and their serfs, between the burghers (*popolani*) and nobles (*grandi*) of the Italian republics, and then again between the higher burghers (*populo grasso*) and humbler citizens (*populo minuto*) of the Italian cities; and once more between employers and employed in the great industrial centres of bur own day; urging again and again amid chronic backsliding the renovation of society by the reign of Christ.

CHAPTER VI.

SCANDALS AND SANCTITY.

48. FACT OF SCANDALS.

We have counted as the sixth antinomy, that the Church is full of scandals and yet all holy: proclaims a law at once difficult and yet easy.

The fact of evil living and evil deeds among believing Christians is beyond question. Even if we take no count of the sin and scandal of heresy and schism (to be dealt with in the eighth chapter), and even if we remove the mountainous accumulation of fables, false judgments, blind prejudice and malignant calumny, there still remains, alas! a second mountain of scandalous fact, beginning with what we read in the pages of the New Testament, such as the many failings of the Corinthian converts or the tepid Church of Laodicea; and discernible century after century. So, for example, the worldly Christians whose portraiture is to be found in the *Shepherd of Hermas*, during the time of peace before the persecution of Decius, and then in natural sequence a multitude of defections; again a hundred years later the influx of laxity after the age of persecutions had ended, those unworthy members of the Church who almost made the great St. Ambrose lose heart, and who clung so fast to pagan licentiousness that in Africa the rude Vandal conquerors were astonished at the spectacle of vice; then later the

scandalous courts of the two great Christian states, the Frankish and the Byzantine; the popes of the tenth century mere puppets of the factious Roman nobles; the sad moral condition even among the pious Anglo-Saxons of the laicised monasteries before the reforms of St. Dunstan; the concubinage of the clergy before the reforms of Gregory VII. (Hildebrand); the heaven-defying court of William Rufus; the unchristian hatreds and homicides of later mediæval Italy; the life and surroundings of Pope Alexander VI., and the licentiousness of the Italian Renaissance; the forlorn state of the archdiocese of Milan when St. Charles Borromeo took possession; the antagonism of rival orders in the face of a common foe, with such disastrous results, for example, in England and Japan; the heart-rending testimony of missionaries that the scandalous lives of Christians are the greatest of all obstacles to the spread of the faith. Even in lesser things there appears a continuity of abuse, and we might think the Fathers were living in the days of Chaucer, when St. Jerome and St. Gregory of Nyssa bear witness to the abuses mingled with the use of pilgrimages, and when St. Chrysostom rebukes the superstitious use of amulets in Antioch and Constantinople, though himself enthusiastic in the rightful veneration of the relics of the martyrs and the wood of the Holy Cross.

49. EXTREME PARTIES.

And then through all centuries we shall be troubled and confused by the distressing antagonism of laxity and rigour, unless indeed we have so grasped the key of the golden mean that even this obstacle is unlocked, and we see how the very antagonism, man being as man is, and truth as truth is, forms a witness to the Church.

Indeed her writers point out that this antagonism was foreshadowed on Calvary, and that there the petty jealousies and miserable disputes which were to come, the lack of concord and charity among believing Christians, such dislocation yet without fracture of the mystical Body of Christ—all was signified by the racking and stretching of the Real Sacred Body, yet with no bone broken.

But the historical fact remains that all through Christian history to this day we can trace two opposing characters within the Church, both of them far from sharing her spirit of sweetness and sanctity.

On the one side we see those who exalt opinions into dogmas, state truths in the most paradoxical form, stretch principles till they are close upon snapping, love to exaggerate decisions of the Church till these appear to the imagination, not in their genuine import, strictly guarded, carefully applied (in the endless special cases of the concrete), but in monstrous proportions; as though no tenderness was to be shown to weaker vessels (who often in spite of much learning are weak because ill-educated); and as though it were zeal and fervour, not false fervour and fanaticism, to trample on the little ones of Christ.

This false fervour exaggerates all things, doctrine and practice alike, ritual and austerity; loves to differ from others, and to thrust before them an image of God without His beauty, being rather the wild and puerile fancies of their own half-converted, half-cleansed and less than half-humbled souls; and thus lacking the gravity and tranquillity of the truth, they bring piety into disesteem.

From this false fervour spring the ill-prepared apologists who think ignorance can be made up for by declamation and vituperation, practising no forbearance, making no allowance; extremists with portentous self-confidence, like the unhappy De Lamennais, who thought because there is truth in traditionalism it is the whole and only truth, and that because metaphysics alone can do little, metaphysics are unnecessary and worthless.[1]

And then, on the other extreme to the violent and rigorous, are the weak-kneed and worldly; false moderation in contrast to false fervour.[2] They forget that for a man to give himself up to the spiritual

[1] See *The Rambler*, vol. x., 1858, pp. 70, 118 *et seq.*; and for various examples of the violent spirit, the chapter on the "Catholic Revival and the New Ultramontanism" in Wilfrid Ward's *W. G. Ward and the Catholic Revival*, pp. 117, 123. Mark three points in which their exorbitance was rectified from Rome: first, the defence of the Classics in clerical education by the encyclical of March, 1853, against the Abbé Gaume's attack on them; then, the condemnation of traditionalism by the Holy See in 1855; and thirdly, the tempered definition in 1870 of Papal Infallibility.

[2] Examples from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are admirably depicted in Wilfrid Ward's *Life of Cardinal Wiseman*, chaps. vi., xvii. and xxiv. On the theory of these Christians see the chapter "What it is to have a Creator" in Faber's *The Creator and the Creature*.

life is to be out of harmony with the world around him, that those who realise the invisible world have a different standard from the votaries of earth. They think reasonable the world's narrow code of prudence and discretion; are infected with its hostility to spiritual direction, to mortification, to Church authority. Concession and compromise are on their lips, to meet the world half way, to disavow unpopular beliefs, to lack loyalty to the Holy See, to think lightly of the majesty of the Church, to appear to the world as men of sense and intelligence. It is not they who have vanquished the mean, ungenerous, selfish spirit of our nature "which at the very first rumour of command, places itself in opposition to the superior who gives it; asks himself whether he is not exceeding his right, and rejoices in a moral and practical matter to commence with scepticism".[1] It is they who not in the generous years of youth, but in the egotistical self-importance of middle life, become malcontents, out of harmony with the Church, and ready (in theological language) to sacrifice the supernatural to the natural, the passive to the active, the infused to the acquired, minimising the incomparable efficacy of the Christian sacraments; and thus a sour, captious, querulous old age may be the end of a life that started with fairest promise.[2]

In view of so many failings are we to falter in our faith? Or to join those who cry out in derision: Is this the glorious Church of Christ?—this, His Bride without stain or wrinkle, holy and immaculate?—this, the heavenly Sion, the home of joy and peace? And indeed the narrative may be so woven by a skilful hand, that without straying from the nominal truth, the history of the Church may be made to appear a chronicle of scandals.

50. SCANDALS FORETOLD AND EXPLAINED.

Nevertheless these very scandals, if once again we look below the surface of things to the depths, if we seek the testimony not of partial but of total fact, if we remember our theological principles—these very scandals in the Church are a witness to her divinity.

Now one first principle to grasp is this, that "Faith is illuminative not operative; it does not force obedience, though it increases responsibility; it heightens guilt, it does not prevent sin".[3] And thus though faith remains, charity may have fled, knowledge can exist without love, and the things unseen, though still believed, may attract no longer.

Given then the fallen state and corrupt inclinations of man, given the high standard of duty exacted by the Church, given the doctrine of our incessant need of reiterated grace, of the life-long struggle placed before every soul, given the implication of frequent falls by the provision of such abundant means of recovery—so potent a spiritual apparatus for raising the fallen—given all this, we must then expect to see among the faithful a constant conflict of good and evil, incessant alterations upwards and downwards among individual Christians, a presumable tendency of all bodies and institutions to decline and be perverted, and their need of periodical recall to the principles of their origin. Nature is not destroyed by grace, and all the natural dispositions and intellects with their several infirmities are found inside the Christian pale as well as outside: "the weak and the strong-minded, the sharp and the dull, the passionate and the phlegmatic, the generous and the selfish, the idle, the proud, the sceptical, the dry-minded, the scheming, the enthusiastic, the self-conceited, the strange, the eccentric; all of whom grace leaves more or less in their respective natural cast or tendency of mind. Thus we have before us a confused and motley scene, such as the world presents generally; good and evil mingled together in all conceivable measures of combination and varieties of result."[4] There is moral confusion in spite of the prevailing intellectual apprehension of the truths of faith and the rules of conduct.

The Church must indeed pay the penalty for her title of Catholic, in particular by enduring in her fold an abundance of dissension. She cannot avail herself of the natural bonds of union that come from a

[1] *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, § 5.

[2] To bring back to the centre these unhappy beings was the life-work of Newman and Faber; to men far apart in many lesser things and externals, yet united in the main thing. And though it was chiefly the violent with whom Newman had to contend, and Faber with the lax, vainly would the lax seek to find countenance from Newman or the violent from Faber. Both have been my guides; and those familiar with their works will recognise in the text above little more than their words interwoven.

[3] *Anglican Difficulties*, Lecture ix.

[4] *Ibid.*

common nationality, common civil government, common sentiments on daily behaviour, common tastes or recreations, literature and art; or again from a common party spirit or a community in privileges jealously guarded against the outside world. She has to forfeit these particular and natural links because of her supernatural and universal claims. She is formed of a miscellaneous crowd that nature would speedily scatter and that grace alone unites.[1] The marvel is not that there are dissensions among the faithful, or that even St. Paul had indignantly to ask, "Is Christ divided?" but that there is overruling unity.

Nor can the Church select her subjects and discriminate in the class or culture or nationality of her converts; all have the one unquestionable title, a soul to be saved; they have but to knock and the door must be opened; and no lack of courtesy, gentility, learning, good antecedents, are a bar to receive the ministrations of her who holds in her hand the chalice of salvation, and in virtue of that precious charge, whatever else she may be, must remain the Church not only of the ill-mannered and coarse-minded, but of the criminal and the outcast. And this too she must needs be in order to be assimilated to her Divine Archetype who took on Himself the burden of man's disgrace and guilt; and she must journey through the centuries bearing as the heaviest of her trials and the greatest hindrance to her success the daily shame of her unworthy members, and be well content if she can save at their death those who have been a disgrace to her during their life.

Moreover from the very first the All Holy Church has known full well the conditions of her earthly pilgrimage, and it has ever been her formal doctrine that she includes sinners among her members, weeds among the wheat not to be rooted out till the Domesday harvest; that her net is to gather in not good fish only but bad; that the foolish virgins no less than the wise come to meet the Bridegroom; that there is woe to those by whom scandal comes, but come indeed it must. We are only yet on the road—*in via;* the goal is not yet reached; the ideal not yet attained; the Church is not a congregation of the perfect, but a training school of the imperfect;[2] and to mistake the Church Militant for the Church Triumphant is an heretical anachronism. Indeed the Church has formally cast forth as heretics the Novatians and Donatists of the old time, and the Lollards and Lutherans of the later time, who held that bad men are not members of the Church but only the predestinate.[3]

Further, from her very nature and very claims we must expect examples of great wickedness within her fold; if a Christian can rise incomparably higher than an alien to the faith, he can also fall lower; *corruptio optimi pessima:* the best becomes the worst.

Finally, the very teaching on asceticism and unworldliness (explained in the third chapter) implies the likelihood that the richer classes—by necessity, as we have seen, the comparatively few—will be in habitual rebellion; the men of business will not endure her teaching on fair dealing, nor a gilded youth her austere morality.

51. THE ORDINARY AND THE HEROIC OBSERVANCE OF THE CHRISTIAN LAW.

But do not these explanations after all only show that Christianity preaches a doctrine too difficult to be observed, loads us with burdens too heavy to bear, is pitched in too high a key for our voices to sing in harmony? And indeed we might be tempted thus to think, and to abandon the law of Christ as too lofty for human endeavour, if we steeped ourselves in the details of evil-doing, and fed our imagination daily with the record of Christian scandals. To provide such a detailed record is fondly thought by many to be a scientific, historical, meritorious provision of objective truth. Each single fact they narrate is true, each statement based on genuine documents. And all the while they forget the warning of historical science that partial truth may issue in total error, that the quantity of our words telling of good and evil must be in suitable proportion to the relative quantity of actual good and evil, and the true individual facts when out of their place in the general scheme of things, when out of focus in our own minds, when out of proportion to the totality of facts, may be the greatest of falsehoods. When therefore for every three words written the threescore are left unwritten that are needed to set the three in their place,

[1] *Anglican Difficulties*, Lecture x.

[2] Well explained by the Rev. E. R. Hull in his controversy in 1904 with the Parsees of Bombay, and reprinted as *Theosophy and Christianity*, London, Catholic Truth Society, 1905.

[3] *Present Position of Catholics*, Lecture iv.

the readers, if ill-instructed and ill-prepared, will end by knowing less than they knew before; they lose what they possessed; their acquisition of knowledge, like a youth's first knowledge of licentiousness, is not a positive but a negative acquisition; their minds are left laden with a balance of error, and their second state of ignorance is worse than the first.

Now there are two great categories of fact, without which the scandals of Christianity can neither be weighed, measured or understood. The first is the actual practice of the Christian law in a multitude of homes, mostly but not exclusively rural and humble; and the second is the heroic life of the great army of God's chosen servants. Therefore, lest I fall into the very fault I have just condemned, it is necessary, having spoken of Christian scandals, to speak again; necessary to add, as the avowed advocate of detailed historical fact, some reference to the particulars both of the ordinary Christian life and of the heroic.

52. EXAMPLES OF CHRISTIAN FAMILY LIFE.

The ordinary daily life and habitual homes of a Christian people are indeed not easy to ascertain or to portray; but we are fortunate in possessing ready at hand the great work of Frederic le Play (of nineteenth century economists second to none) who described with needful details in a series of monographs some sixty typical families of the working classes from one extremity of Europe to the other, as they appeared about the middle of the nineteenth century.[1] Many examples are to be found among these where the Christian religion is taught and practised in its integrity. Look at the Hungarian peasant family on the plains of the Theiss observed by Le Play in the year 1846 (vol. ii., chap. vii.); solid piety, religious education of children, purity of morals, not an illegitimate child in the commune, affection and care bestowed on children, respect for women and the aged, early but not premature marriages, profound reverence by children all their life to their parents. Look, again, at the German iron-smelter's family at Hundsrucke, near Coblentz, observed by Le Play in 1851 (vol. iv., chap. ii.). Look at the Basque families of peasants and fishermen as they were to be seen in 1856 at St. Sebastian in Spain, or at Lavedan and Labourd in France (vol. iv., chap. vi., and vol. v., chap. v.). Look at that amiable Provençal family described by M. Focillon in 1859, and typical of a whole class, half peasants in their native village, half workers in the soap factories of Marseilles, and whom the iniquities of French legislation, and the temptations of a great city, had not been able to turn from reverence, from moral purity and domestic peace (vol. iv., chap. viii.). Look at the crofter of Brittany visited by M. Duchatellier in 1851 (vol. iv., chap. vii.). Look at the family of Tuscan metayers as they were found by M. Peruzzi in 1857 and, like a multitude of their fellow-peasants, living happy and secure, full of affection and reverence, and honouring religion by the outward and inward practices of piety (vol. iv., chap. iii.).[2]

Come nearer home and consider the example of Ireland—Ireland let us say during the sixty years before the great famine—where a vast population in the sordid poverty that comes from the extreme of economic misrule, lacking literary or artistic cultivation, their religion shorn of its beautiful externals and accidental dignity by the hand of persecution, still in virtue of that religion, and by obedience to it, giving a shining example of Christian family life, immorality unknown or scarcely known, reverence for parents and dutiful care for brethren universal, and happy patience amid constant troubles—virtues so luminous, a practice of the Christian law so diligent, that by the mere example they drew to their faith an hereditary antagonist.[3]

Once more when the repute of Spanish America was perhaps at its lowest, and Mexico had suffered some fifty years of anarchy, an After-Christian traveller from America in 1869 was amazed at the universal excellence of Mexican family life, the reverence for parents, affection in the

[1] *Les Ouvriers Européens*, published originally in 1855 in a large folio volume. They were republished in six large octavo vols. in 1879. The references that follow in the text are to this latter edition.

[2] These illustrations are drawn from a previous work of the author now out of print, *Studies of Family Life*, 1886.

[3] See Wilfrid Ward's *Life of Aubrey de Vere*, p. 183, on the conversion of Sir Stephen de Vere. It was almost as if the coolies of Assam or Guiana were to convert, by the spectacle of their virtues, an English tea-planter or sugar-planter to their faith.

home, total absence of the precocious insolence and vice so familiar to him in his own land.[1] He declared that in the family circle they were models for the world, and was only mistaken in thinking their conduct strange and solitary, due to their nationality not to their religion.

But indeed such family life was nothing new; and let France, conspicuous to-day as the sad parent of the After-Christians, give an example from her happier past. Various sources, in particular those unpublished family records known as *libri rationum* or *livres de raison*, have been examined by M. de Ribbe in his book on the families of France in the olden time. The inner life of the French homes has been laid before him, and he has found in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a deeply religious spirit among rich and poor, filial piety, parental devotion, reverence to the mother and the widowed mother, the traditions of the past handed down from one generation to another, a family house for poor as well as rich, not a lodging or a tenement, cultivation of the intellect among women as well as men, charity to the poor, edifying deaths, pious legacies (notably there were foundations in almost every village to enable poor girls to marry), wills a source of union, not of disputes and lawsuits, peace among brethren; in a word, the Christian family.

The pious home of France had its counterpart in Germany, and the details can be read for the fifteenth century in Janssen's, for the twelfth century in Michael's, histories of the German people. Moreover, the trade guilds of the fifteenth century and previous centuries reflect the spirit of contemporary family life; immorality was a bar to admission; the members were bound as though they were brothers, to mutual help, common worship, and works of charity to the poor; the wife or widow of a master was given a position of privilege and honour; and fourthly, a fatherly care was taken of the apprentice, who became a member of the family, and for whose moral as well as technical training the master was responsible.

Let this little be sufficient to show that those who say the common Christian virtues are beyond the common reach will find in history their condemnation.

[1] Colonel A. S. Evans, *Our Sister Republic*, chap. xvi.

53. THE SAINTS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE.

Let us pass to the second category of fact, the heroic life of the great army of saints. And if we shrink from the task, we cannot escape it; all too urgent are the commands of genuine historical science, that bids us, if it is with man's history that we are dealing, not to pass by the greatest of historical facts; and if it is man that we are making known, not to hide the highest summits to which man has attained. There is no help for it; and unless the secular history of these later ages is interwoven with Church history, and Church history is interwoven with hagiography, we had better close the historical record altogether; for silence is better than falsehood, and a blank page better than a caricature.

The great fact then is this, that the Catholic Church is the mother of saints; that, from the very beginning of Christianity to this day, weak creatures, raised to participate in the Divine nature, have led a life of supernatural virtue, acting and suffering with faith, patience and love, all three superhuman, and crowning all with a death, sometimes by violence, sometimes in tranquillity, but always superhuman; and decade after decade, through nineteen centuries, sometimes more numerous, sometimes less, but always present, have formed an unbroken golden chain, men and women, old and young, of all tribes and tongues, of all ranks of society, of all callings and occupations; some putting the seal to a life of innocence, some raised from an ordinary life, some rescued from a life of guilt; amid every variety of circumstance; sorrow and failure being to some the occasion of sanctity, gladness and success to others; a beautiful mosaic of souls of every conceivable pattern and complexion of sanctity, making up the fulness of Christ;[2] and while some of them have borne the yoke from their youth upwards, others have shot up at once to their high

[2] In this connection it is well to notice, in order to condemn the singular narrowness that has no good word for the contemplative life as distinct from the active; when the very notion of the corporative life of the Church requires all kinds of sacred functions, the whole being perfected by the perfection of each part, and in this case requiring that some should be set apart (as a supreme privilege) for incessant worship and for a testimony to man's last and highest end. It follows that "St. Simeon Stylites in the desert was as actively a member of the Christian community as St. Paul".

stature, fulfilling in a short space a long time, drawn all of a sudden into the irresistible whirlpool of Divine love, like the jailer or executioner or simple bystander converted by the sight of Christ's martyrs, and then and there unexpectedly enrolled in the white-robed army, marching with joy forthwith to torment and death, having drawn from the fountains in the home of the Mother of Grace, whither they have entered, the spirit of indomitable fortitude; but however they have entered, how long or in what manner they have served, all alike in the one thing and the one thing necessary, all drawn by a personal love for a Crucified Redeemer, all aiming at that mystical union with God, the prelude and foretaste of that personal, self-annihilating, adoring, unchanging, eternal love in which alone our heart can find rest.[1]

Such in general is the great fact of heroic life; the particular details can be gathered from the literature of hagiography, whence we can draw what is needful for the purposes of Church history and of science. For if we set the facts in chronological order we shall have to pronounce that the phenomenon of heroic sanctity, amid the greatest variety of circumstances, is an invariable concomitant of the Church, not of one place indeed or one nation, but always present in some part of the Church, and a perpetual witness to her supernatural character.

Let us then glance in the briefest and most fragmentary of surveys at the great reality.

54. HISTORICAL EXAMPLES.

The innumerable martyrs of the first three centuries, in all parts of the Roman Empire—who can forget them, or their sweet-tongued poet Prudentius? Then followed in quick succession the multitudinous band of Egyptian hermits, and the great Fathers of the Church in East and West alike, showing there was no divorce between the gifts of intellect and the gifts of faith. And if in some measure there came peace to the Church within the Roman Empire, there raged in Persia, beyond her south-eastern borders, an appalling persecution. Then came the barbarian invasions, but no break in the history of sanctity; and a new phase of holy living can be traced in the monasteries of St. Basil in the East, St. Benedict in the West, and St. Columba in the North; while far away, all unexpectedly, the pagan dream of the Islands of the Blest seemed to take solid form in Ireland and then England, before the Danish devastation, as Islands of the Saints. A little later, with the fresh bloom of Europe, came the Saints of the Middle Ages, Gregory VII., and Anselm, and Bernard, and Bruno, and Thomas of Canterbury; then the mighty thirteenth century, with saints numbered by thousands who followed in the track of Dominic and Francis; and even in the latter and sadder times the golden chain is still unbroken: Bridget of Sweden and Catherine of Siena brighten the dark days of Avignon; and Thomas à Kempis in the North, and in the South Bernadine of Siena and Antoninus of Florence turn to sweetness the bitter draught of the fifteenth century. And our own England? Whose pulses do not beat quicker as the time draws nigh when we see what men can do and what men can be, and when we read the acts of the protomartyrs of the new persecution; of John Fisher, Thomas More, the London Carthusians, the Observant Friars; their steadfastness amid defection, their clear minds amid confusion, their ardour amid coldness, their endurance amid faintheartedness? Truly the annals of sanctity amid human darkness are like sparks running to and fro among the reeds and ever and anon lighting up a brilliant flame. Such a flame illumined the whole world in the later sixteenth and earlier seventeenth centuries; names in all men's mouths, such as Francis Xavier, Philip Neri, Teresa, Francis of Sales, Vincent of Paul; and a renewed army of martyrs, conspicuously those in England, the noblest trophy of the Elizabethan age, and the immense multitudes who shed their blood for the faith in Japan, where the persecution almost surpassed in atrocity and in glory the persecution by Pagan Rome.[2]

The eighteenth century came, a sorrowful time, when the forces of evil seemed to overpower the forces of good; and yet a century illuminated, not by the lurid glare of Voltairian "enlightenment" or German *Aufklärung*, but by the pure flame of Christian devotion, by the martyrdoms in China counted by tens of thou-

[1] Faber, *The Creator and the Creature*, bk. iii., chap. iv.; Newman, *Present Position of Catholics*, Lecture ix., 6.

[2] See the details from authentic sources given by Fr. H. Thurston in *The Month*, April, 1905.

sands at the beginning of the century, and by the copious martyrdoms at the end during the French Revolution, as of the sixteen Carmelite nuns of Compiègne singing together sweetly as they were led to the scaffold, the youngest novice first; and the sound not ceasing but only becoming weaker as the voices became fewer, till the Prioress last of all was slain and the song was silenced. These latter years of the eighteenth century matched well with the earlier; and the years between were adorned with the bright supernatural lives (to name no others) of Grignon de Montfort, Alfonso Liguori, and Paul of the Cross.

Nor has the nineteenth century failed us, but even now from the yet imperfect record can show her muster roll of heroism; simple parish priests like the Curé of Ars or his contemporary John Baptist Guarino; laymen and lay women like the young workman Nunzio Sulprizio of Naples or Anna Maria Taigi of Rome; founders of congregations like Mother Barat or Don Bosco; a crowd too large to enumerate, who have added to the old religious orders a new lustre; bishops like Lawrence Imbert in 1839, and a goodly band of priests who in Annam, China and Corea have laid down their lives for their faith,[1] mingling their blood in those lands with the blood of many thousands of native Christians, who have shown themselves of the same dauntless race (*τὸ ἄμαχον γένος*) in whom St. Chrysostom fourteen centuries before could rejoice.

And within the limits of Europe itself during the nineteenth century a vast roll of statistics can be compiled on sufferings for the faith: the pillage and slaughter that befell the monks and friars in Spain in the thirties; the persecution in Switzerland in the forties; the martyrdoms under the Commune in Paris; the persecution in Germany in the seventies, called with unconscious irony the struggle for intellectual civilisation—Germany whence many hundreds of priests and some 8,000 women, devoted to good deeds, were driven, without even the form of a trial, into exile; where many of the clergy, bishops among them, were cast into prison, and hundreds of parishes lay long with none to minister to the needs of souls.

[1] See Cardinal Steinhuber's article in the *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*, January, 1905, based on the work *Catalogus ac status causaram beatificationis Servorum Dei et Beatorum canonizationis*, Romae, 1901.

But all these things are less appalling than the recurrent and ruthless persecution in the East of Europe, Lithuania and Poland under Russian rule, renewing in the nineteenth century the work begun by the Empress Catherine in the eighteenth; hundreds of thousands of Catholic "Uniates" forcibly registered as Schismatic "Orthodox," and then forbidden to practise the Catholic religion under pain of fines, of imprisonment, of scourging, of seeing their children torn from them, of being sent to the living death of Siberia. Nay, the persecutor has not shrunk from inflicting the tortures of a lingering death—witness the piteous annals of the mines of Siberia; witness the acts of the Polish nuns of Minsk, dying under the scourges, or slowly drowned as they were dragged after a boat through the waters, rather than abandon their faith.

Better now can we understand the words of the Creed, bracketed as the ninth article in the Catechism, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints". Better now can we understand how the Church, though the Church of sinners, is yet holy: holy in potentiality, in many cases holy in act, in all cases aiming at the holy supernatural life, and leading to it; exhibiting sanctity inchoate and in the process of making, ever directed towards an ideal to be reached at last, the sanctity undimmed of the Church Triumphant.

55. THE CONSENSUS OF EXPERTS.

Vae soli, woe to him who stands alone, is a sociological as well as a scriptural maxim. It is needful in all the sciences to make use of the previous accumulation of knowledge, and not ourselves start afresh or stand apart, but rather follow the consensus of experts. Still more in spiritual things it is not for each man to find out all by himself, or take his own separate and subjective experience as the test of truth. Rather we must make use of the treasures of spiritual labour and experience that have been accumulated in the past, and not stand apart from spiritual experts, the Saints who in virtue of their sanctity have been the chief ministers of the Divine Spirit by whom the dogmas of the Church have been unfolded. For those best know the doctrine who best live the life.

We must then hold fast to continuity of dogmas and hierarchy; we must hold fast to fellowship with all the Saints;

sanctity being inextricably entwined with faith and obedience; without dogma there are no Saints; without Saints there is no union with God.

It is the unwilling mission of all error to minister in the service of truth; and "things evil have a soul of goodness that we may observingly distil it out". The unsuspected unwitting recognition of the all-importance of heroic sanctity—this is the soul of goodness to be distilled out of the repulsive philosophy of the German Frederick Nietsche. For he proclaimed that the supreme task of mankind was to produce the *Uebermensch* or Super-man, the grand and lawless being above and beyond good and evil. In this he was only partially wrong. For the temple he built for the monstrous *Uebermensch* belongs rather to those who have shown themselves, in the truest sense, to be men. And these are the Christian saints; these the choicest flower, the richest fruit of humanity, who like Christ have gone forth in all ages and peoples as sheep in the midst of wolves, self-sacrificed victims to the cause of God, who have sown in tears that others might reap in joy, who have laboured hard and long that others might enter quickly and easily into the fruit of their labours.

To produce Christian saints is the supreme task of mankind; and it is for each poor wanderer to utter as his supreme cry: Let my lot be with the saints and my end like theirs!

CHAPTER VII.

LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.

56. THE MEANING AND SUPREMACY OF CONSCIENCE.

We have counted as the seventh antinomy that the Church upholds and yet opposes religious freedom or liberty of conscience.

To offer the alternative of conversion or the sword is a Moslem not a Christian practice. Much rather "the Church takes anxious care that none be compelled unwillingly to embrace the Catholic faith; for no man, as Augustine wisely warns us, can believe unless he is willing to believe".[1] Indeed the incongruity is obvious between faith as the gift of God, and force as the work of man; and it is a fundamental claim of the Church to demand liberty of conscience. Only let us understand what is meant by conscience and what is meant by liberty.

Now as opposed to the materialistic or pantheistic answer to man's questionings, the theistic answer proclaims a Divine law as the rule of ethical truth, and the standard of right and wrong; the Divine reason or will commanding the observance of the natural order of things, an order that itself is from God. The impression or light of this Divine law in the minds and hearts of rational creatures is what is called in Christian theology the natural law. "This law, as apprehended in the minds of individual men, is called 'conscience'; and though it may suffer refraction in passing into the intellectual medium of each, it is not thereby so affected as to lose its character of being the Divine law, but still has, as such, the prerogative of commanding obedience."[2] Hence it is never lawful to go against our conscience: it claims to be a Divine voice speaking within us, and telling us that this or that is now to be done or not to be done, and demanding, not in a speculative matter but in our present conduct, a dutiful obedience. The particular dictate may be mistaken; conscience may be (as it is called) erroneous; but yet it is to be obeyed. It is a spiritual and invisible influence too subtle for science, too profound for literature; independent of the powers of the State. It is the aboriginal Vicar of Christ; and even though the eternal priesthood throughout the Church could cease to be, still in the voice of conscience the sacerdotal principle would remain and would have a sway.[3]

And if the application of force can neither awaken nor lay to rest the sense of right and wrong, the consciousness of transgression, the pangs of guilt, the dread of retribution, that are first principles in religion, still less can it touch the love that is a first principle of the Christian religion. As Christians we

[1] Leo XIII., encyclical *Immortale Dei*, given in Denzinger's *Enchiridion*, n. 1737.

[2] *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, § 5, on "Conscience".

[3] *Ibid.*, § 5.

boast that a personal love of God is the very substance of our spiritual life; and we are taught to beg that our union with God and with our brethren may be like to the ineffable love and union of wills that subsist eternally between the Persons of the Divine Trinity. How can any earthly magistrate touch this region of mysterious affection? How can love be enkindled by external compulsion?

57. THE MEANING OF FREEDOM AND ITS HARMONY WITH LAW.

Conscience then indeed and a religion of love must be free. But what is freedom or liberty? Not the false liberty that is, so to speak, an artificial determinism, surrendering our own will to the domination of the strongest motive and becoming the slave of passion; not the false liberty that recognises no supreme rule of a moral law, no Creator above us, but claims as a right to think, speak, write, act according to its judgment or its humour without any thought of God at all; and claims for each man "to be his own master in all things and to profess what he pleases, asking no one's leave, and accounting priest or preacher, speaker or writer, unutterably impertinent, who dares to say a word against his going to perdition, if he like it, in his own way".[1]

This is mere lawlessness, the irrational freedom of the wild beast. This is the freedom "by which the luxurious mean licence, and the reckless mean change; by which the rogue means rapine and the fool equality; by which the proud mean anarchy and the malignant mean violence".[2] This is "the very spirit of Whiggery: opposition for its own sake, striving against the truth because it happens to be commanded us; as if wisdom were less wise because it is powerful".[3] This is the liberty of which Dr. Johnson said: "We are all agreed as to our own liberty, we would have as much of it as we can get; but we are not agreed as to the liberty of others: for in proportion as we take, others must lose".[4] This is the liberty meant by Rousseau when he says in his *Contrat Social:* "Man is born free, and yet everywhere is in chains".

[1] *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, § 5.
[2] Ruskin, *Seven Lamps*, vii., § 2.
[3] *Newman's Letters*, ed. by Anne Mozley, vol. i., p. 269.
[4] Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, ed. Napier, iii., p. 375.

Much rather the sober definition of liberty in the social and political sphere is the being unhindered in the exercise of our rights and the practice of our duties. But rights and duties are meaningless without law; and human law is incoherent if not resting on Divine law. Therefore Divine law is the needed foundation not merely of internal conscience but also of external liberty. Wisely then it has been said by Coleridge: "What then is freedom? Rightly understood, a universal licence to be good." So Montesquieu: "Political liberty does not consist in a man doing what he wishes, but in being able to do what he ought to wish". So Boetius twelve centuries earlier: "To be obedient to justice is the very height of liberty". So George Eliot in the mouth of the preacher in *Felix Holt:* "I apprehend that there is a law in music, disobedience whereunto would bring us in our singing to the level of shrieking maniacs or howling beasts: so that herein we are well instructed how true liberty can be nought but the transfer of obedience from the will of one man or of a few men to that which is the norm or rule for all men".

Everything human indeed can be abused; but human law in its use as distinct from its abuse is not the opponent but the protector of liberty, men being subject to this law precisely because they are free and reasonable beings, not irrational automata. By human law the rights and duties of men in society (and we have to deal with no other men) instead of being confused and imperilled are made clear and secure; and they are thus enabled to live more easily in agreement with the rule of reason and the law of God, and to fulfil the very object for which they are on earth.[5]

Hence it is a misconception to complain of the multitude of modern laws as a diminution of our liberty. If they are a diminution, it is not because they are laws or because they are multitudinous, but because they are mistaken or ill-executed; and if with the growth of population and the change in the methods of industry, the area of restraint is enlarged, this enlargement is precisely to protect

[5] "Igitur in hominum societate libertas veri nominis non est in eo posita ut agas quod lubet, ex quo vel maxima existeret turba et confusio in oppressionem civitatis evasura, sed in hoc, ut per leges civiles expeditius possis secundum legis aeternae praescripta vivere."—Encyclical *Libertas praestantissimum* of Leo XIII., June, 1888.

the liberty of good citizens by the restraint of evil-doers.

Now, madam, may his highness live in freedom,
And this man out of prison?

Thus for over fifty years the law of England has forbidden women to work in underground mines, and thereby has made a salutary addition to the restraint of covetousness, and a salutary addition to the liberty of womanhood. Again, the law of Germany effectively forbids the common practices by which usurious money-lenders inveigle men and women to their ruin; and the law thereby has made a salutary addition to the restraint of evil-doers, and to the liberty of the German people.

If this is the true conception of law and liberty, it follows that the rights of conscience, like other rights, can claim protection; and that a wise legislation will increase the area of restraint in order to increase the area of liberty. If it will not suffer the defenceless public to be robbed of their material goods, but puts restraint on thieves; so too it will not suffer the defenceless public to be robbed of their moral and intellectual patrimony, but puts restraint on deceivers, lest a nation's greatest asset, the fundamental truths of faith and morals, of justice and society, be whittled away by sophistry.

58. POPULAR CHARACTER OF ECCLESIASTICAL INTERVENTION.

And here once again we see that Holy Church through good report and evil report has shown herself the true friend of the common people; and when men murmur against the Index, denounce the Inquisition, and spit, like a recent enlightened traveller from America, on the tomb of Torquemada, they forget that the Church is primarily for the poor, the weak, the unlearned and the simple. It is for those described in a recent controversy as "large popular audiences whose innocence is such that to deceive them is like deceiving a little child," and as "that big fateful child, the public, to whom above all *maxima debetur reverentia*".[1] To preserve to these, the much greater part of society, the incomparable goods of pure morals and the true faith, goods that (as we have seen) even in this world are to them the source, and indispensable source, of happiness—to prevent this defenceless multitude from being robbed of their supremest patrimony—what man with any soul of honour or sense of humanity who would not draw his sword for their preservation?

Religion's all or nothing; it's no mere smile
O' contentment, sigh of aspiration, sir—
No quality of the finelier tempered clay
Like its whiteness or its lightness; rather, stuff
O' the very stuff; life of life, and self of self.
I tell you men won't notice. When they do,
They'll understand.

No wonder therefore when the Church has been raised to a position of earthly power, when the rulers of the world have knelt at her feet and asked for her guidance, she has implored them to protect her little ones from scandal, to preserve her tender sheep from the ravening wolves. No wonder that she has ever been on the watch against lawless literature which appeals not to argument and reason and fact, but to imagination, to curiosity, to the sense of honour, to the sense of beauty, to the sense of ridicule, which insinuates, seduces, declaims, inflames, carries captive—that the Church is on the watch lest so versatile an agent should cause that which is not true to pass under the name of truth.

No wonder again that she emphatically bids men of science take "great care to avoid scandal or shocking the public mind or unsettling the weak; the association between truth and error being so strong in particular minds that it is impossible to weed them of the error without rooting up the wheat with it".[2]

And against reckless hypotheses that may or may not be ultimately established as truth, against half truths or premature truths that in the present context are the parents of falsehood, she bids her children be on their guard, and fights with the best weapons she is able; and again no wonder. For not to her does the multitude appear as a field for the experiments of men of science, a *corpus vile* for their vivisection. It is not her voice that will ever consent to sacrifice the welfare of the many for the benefit—even if it be the benefit—of the few.[3] And thus the few, those strong and superior beings who are

[1] *The Times*, 24th Oct., 1904.

[2] *Idea of a University*, Lecture on "Christianity and Scientific Investigation".

[3] See Wilfrid Ward in the Epilogue to his *Life of Cardinal Wiseman*, ii., pp. 552, 553. He well explains how in defence of the highest truth the Church has not hesitated to make "temporary inquisitorial incursions on critical and physical science as practically dangerous to the faith of the multitude"—*Ibid.*, p. 548.

immune from common ignorance and corruption, for whom the exhibition of vice is no allurement, for whom the dissection of putridity is no danger, who can read anything and hear anything without harm, whose intelligence is above the risk of deception, whose imagination never overpowers their reason, whose judgment is never swayed by prejudice still less distorted by passion, these winged and chosen mortals must perforce be tolerant with the parapets and balustrades and fences and walls and sign-posts and danger posts that compassionate authority has set up for us, the unwinged, ill-equipped and stumbling multitude.

59. THE HISTORY OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE.

As a matter of history the divorce of religion from the State may be termed an After-Christian invention; for the theory if not the practice of the Fore-Christians may be summed up in the maxim that the first care of the State should be the service of the Gods.

And it has appeared the obvious duty and has been the habitual practice of Christian Governments to restrain what seemed to them the mischievous propagation of error, and at the least not to allow (to use the words of a once famous pamphlet) "a perfectly free course to blasphemy, filthiness and sedition".[1]

Not to all, but to many, of those who have rebelled against the unity of the Church, one or more of these ill-sounding names have been applicable; and in any case the early Church was unanimous in regarding heresy and apostasy as extreme wickedness. It is not surprising then that the Roman State, when it passed from being a persecutor to being a neophyte, endeavoured by laws to repress the mischief brought by false teaching to the Church and the Empire. "As the Donatists, after the Synods of Rome and Arles, as well as after their trial by Constantine, did not submit, but persisted in their defiant demeanour and deeds of violence, the emperor issued in 316 a severe edict, depriving them of their churches, confiscating their property, and banishing the most stubborn of their leaders. After the Council of Nicæa, in 325, he pronounced banishment upon Arius and two bishops of his party. Further, the immunities of the clergy were limited to Catholics, heretical assemblies were forbidden, heretical writings sought out and destroyed. Theodosius published an edict, in which he threatened heretics, required from all his subjects an acknowledgment of the Nicene Creed, deprived the Arians in Constantinople of their Churches, which he gave to Catholics, and in 381 forbade heretics to possess churches or hold divine worship in the cities.

"Laws still more severe were subsequently enacted against the Manicheans, against whom an edict had been issued by the [pagan] emperor Diocletian, A.D. 296, on account of their excesses and their immoral doctrines, condemning the leaders to be burnt and their followers to decapitation or loss of property. Theodosius declared the Manicheans to be infamous and incapable of inheriting or of making wills; those amongst them called Encratites were to be punished with death. The Pretorian Prefects were to appoint *inquisitors*—the name first appears here—to discover and prosecute them."[2]

There was no question on the principle of such laws being right, no scandal at the civil power doing what appeared its obvious duty. St. Augustine indeed had thought differently, but reasoning and experience, as he tells us, brought him to a complete change of his view; and the Roman law has enshrined in the Theodosian code the maxim that what is done against Divine religion is an injury to all.[3]

And this principle was a juridical commonplace for more than a thousand years and proclaimed anew in the eighteenth century by Blackstone when he declared: "All moral evidence, all confidence in human veracity, must be weakened by irreligion and overthrown by infidelity. Wherefore all affronts to Christianity, or endeavours to depreciate its efficacy, are highly deserving of human punishment." Nay, in the earlier years of the nineteenth century a Chief Justice of England pronounced that Christianity was the law of the land; and Dr. Arnold for all his anti-sacerdotalism could not endure the thought of the admission into Parliament of Jews and avowed unbelievers in Christ.[4]

[1] Gladstone's *Vaticanism*, p. 22.

[2] Hergenröther, *Catholic Church and Christian State*, English edition, ii., pp. 301, 302.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 304, 305.

[4] *W. G. Ward and the Oxford Movement*, p. 378.

60. THE "MODERN" PRESUMPTION AND ITS DISTORTION OF HISTORY.

But a complete change of opinion has swept over the world; the doctrine of religious toleration, imperfectly promulgated by Locke, has been held to be a fundamental acquisition of modern thought; that no theological doctrine is more than an opinion which happens to be held by bodies of men; that liberty of conscience means the right of every man to reason and judge on religious matters without any interference on the part of any earthly authority; that consequently the civil power has no positive duty to maintain religious truth; while every educated and reasonable man, as opposed to a blind fanatic, should be tolerant of the opinion of others, a Christian above all, who professes to be charitable in his judgments of others, and humble in the estimate of his own wisdom.

So steeped is public opinion in this view, so overpowering the dominion of this portion of the spirit of the age, so grave the charge of intolerance against the Christian Church that a reasonable discussion of fact and opinion is scarcely possible. It has indeed been pointed out wisely and well that the matter of toleration must be viewed historically, circumstances having utterly changed since a tribunal of intolerance could serve as a bulwark of the Church directly, and of the Christian State indirectly; that many of the heretics of early and mediæval times were worse than the worst socialists, anarchists, or secret societies of modern times, and were propagators of horrible immoralities, and always threatened and often executed sacrilege, plunder, violence and slaughter against true Christians, and were totally destructive not merely of the existing but of all social order; that the Church has made a clear distinction between formal or wilful heretics, and material or unwitting, between initial rebellion and hereditary antagonism; that the sphere for the latter has in later years been greatly increased; that rights and political powers acquired by dissidents in a Catholic country have been, and are to be, respected; that civil and political toleration does not imply dogmatic toleration; again, that compared with the lay tribunals of former times the contemporary procedure and punishments of ecclesiastical tribunals were rational and humane; that the Church had to restrain the severity of lay courts and lay opinion in dealing with heretics; that the Spanish Inquisition in particular, though by no means a mere department of State, was used at times as an instrument of State to secure the imperilled national unity of Spain, its severity being highly displeasing to the Holy See, whither flowed when possible both fugitives and appeals; that the prevention or suppression of all kinds of immorality and of criminal magic were among the main functions of ecclesiastical tribunals; that by any fair standard of comparison the treatment of heretics and likewise of Jews in the centre of Christendom has been conspicuous by mildness; that if there have been, and there is no denying it, many abuses, these are common to all institutions where power is in the hands of man, a chronic infirmity of all governments; and that the abuses of ecclesiastical courts are as nothing to those of the civil courts.

But to point out these historical considerations avails little against the tyranny of a first principle in favour of religious toleration, and rejecting any sort of religious restraint. This has become a popular dogma; it is taken to be plain common sense; of the truth of it each individual is still more sure because it is not merely his own opinion, but the opinion of nearly every one about him (like the opinion in the Carolinas in mid-nineteenth century on the rightfulness of negro slavery, or in Manchester and Birmingham on the incontrovertible fitness of free trade; or among the higher classes, the men of letters and manufacturers of Great Britain on the folly and mischief of trade unions). Such popular dogmas cease to be opinions, are taken for truths, and the opposite opinions are looked upon as impossible and absurd.[1]

Hence while this state of mind continues, any detailed account of the history of religious restraint, though every fact be verbally true, issues in a practical accumulation of falsehood, because it has become a practical accumulation of scandal; and our wearied reason yields before the incessant suggestion of the imagination that all is ignorance, superstition, folly and injustice. It is as if we had to describe the daily life of London or Paris to a vegetarian community among

[1] Thus in the sixties so popular and respected a writer as Ruskin was held to be writing sheer nonsense when in a popular magazine he challenged some of the dogmas (now abandoned) of the current Political Economy; and a prudent editor stopped the articles abruptly.

whom it was a first principle that to take animal life for the sake of food was intrinsically immoral. For our portrait of those cities would be horribly distorted by the imagination of our hearers. The most refined and honourable men and women, full of kindness and deeds of mercy, would appear no better than cannibals, every meat salesman no better than a purveyor of human flesh, the details of rearing live stock, the course of the cattle trade, the sanitary regulations of slaughter-houses, the wages and profits of the workers in the trade, all would be seen through a horrible medium of cruelty and blood.

It is not otherwise with a community steeped in the doctrine that has deceptively taken the name of liberty of conscience, and claims unlimited toleration for all places and all times. They cannot receive an accurate narrative of fact—say of the religious laws of the Theodosian code in the fifth century, or the English anti-Lollard legislation of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, or the Roman Inquisition in the seventeenth. For all this would be seen through a distorted medium, and facts true in themselves would be changed by their passage through the mind of the recipients into a repulsive caricature.

So even were this the place for historical details, give them I would not. That enlightened traveller to the tomb of Torquemada, of whom I have spoken, must first abandon his mistaken first principle before he can understand the records of history.

61. WEAKNESS OF THE THEORY OF TOLERATION.

For indeed this first principle of universal toleration, this dogma of undogmatism, which so warps our judgment and overpowers our understanding, far from being an established truth, cannot be carried out in its integrity without leading us to social dissolution. In the postscript to his reply to Gladstone's attack on the Church, Newman set forth the legitimate conclusions of Mill's *Essay on Liberty* as follows: "No immoral doctrines, plays, poems, novels, conduct, acts, may be visited by the reprobation of public opinion; nothing must be put down, I do not say by the laws, but even by society, by the press, by religious influence, merely on the ground of shocking the sense of decency and the modesty of a Christian community. Nay, the police must not visit Holywell Street, nor a licence be necessary for dancing rooms; but the most revolting atrocities of heathen times and countries must for conscience' sake be allowed free exercise in our great cities. Averted looks indeed and silent disgust is admissible against them, but nothing of a more energetic character."[1] Mill indeed, as the great master pointed out, is not to be charged with having advocated these conclusions; but they followed from his argument, and they are the inevitable issue of the undogmatic principle and the theory of toleration. And the reason is this; the evidence for the first principles of morality and order, and for natural religion, are no less obscure, even obscurer, than those for revealed religion; they can just as easily and with equal plausibility be argued away; and every theoretical halting place on the downward slope is but an illogical compromise, but a slippery foothold. Conscious or subconscious scepticism is the major premise of theoretical toleration, whereas, in the words of Prof. Graham, "convinced men if they have the power *must* persecute unless they discover that persecution may defeat its end". Hence the man without "the will to persecute" (he should have written "the will to repress mischievous error") is a man without convictions.[2]

Locke, himself a pioneer of "toleration," is compelled to make exceptions so wide that at least three-fourths of Christendom would have been excluded from his indulgence.[3] And in our own days, when other matters are under discussion and for a moment the Index and Inquisition are forgotten and men speak out their mind, patience, persuasion and public

[1] *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, Postscript to § 6.

[2] *English Political Philosophy from Hobbes to Maine*, "Essay on Locke".

[3] He excluded *firstly* "opinions contrary to human society or to those moral rules which are necessary to the preservation of such society"; *secondly* those who arrogate to themselves peculiar prerogatives, opposed to the civil rights of the rest, *e.g.*, those who uphold that "dominion is founded on grace"; *thirdly* those who will not teach and practise toleration or who give themselves up to another prince; *fourthly* all atheists. On these principles there would have been no toleration for Catholics, for Orthodox Greeks and for many zealous Protestants, notably American Puritans, all disqualified under the third head. In modern times, apart from disqualifications under the fourth head, almost any doctrine could be "persecuted" under the elastic provision of the first head.

opinion are held as old-fashioned liberalism, ridiculed as a "Quaker-like mind," and it is openly proclaimed to be the duty of Liberals to be intolerant towards the actively intolerant and those who would undermine all reasonable liberty.[1]

But reasonable liberty may simply mean my liberty as opposed to your liberty; it may mean the liberty which the After-Christian classes in Germany asserted in their furious campaign against the Lex Heinze that would have bridled immorality—the liberty for Zola and Ibsen and Hauptmann and D'Annunzio; it is the liberty described above in the third chapter from the pages of St. Augustine, the unrestrained self-indulgence, moral and intellectual, of the few, based on the degradation and servitude of the many.

62. CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES BUT NOT OF PRINCIPLES FOR THE CHURCH.

But the Church, claiming illumination from a Divine teacher, is without hesitation or inconsistency. It is no inconsistency to recognise a change of circumstances, nay her very profession is to adapt herself to them all. Now whenever *de facto* a number of different religions dwell intermingled, we need a *modus vivendi* for the sake of social peace. In some cases absolute equality of social position and political rights may be the most suitable constitution for the composite society; in other cases the reverse, and inequality suitable; a mosaic of different rights and privileges, to be compared to the mosaic of rights in the British Empire, wherein 400,000,000 human beings are bound together with amazing inequality according to race, colour, language, locality and religion.[2] Moreover, the technical revolution in the means of transport, in the methods of industry, in the provisions for warfare, which have rendered this great empire possible, have caused such an intermingling of mankind, such incessant contact among members of various religions, that to preserve in any large country the unity of religion is rarely possible, or only possible at the cost of evils even greater than the breach of unity. In practice therefore there is need of a compromise; the State indeed ought to have a conscience. "But what if it happens to have half a dozen, or a score, or a hundred in religious matters each different from each? . . . No government could be formed [in England] if religious unanimity was a *sine qua non*."[3] To preserve indeed as much enforcement of the moral law and of simple theism as a sickly social body can endure, has become a pressing duty of government among European races if they are not to be swallowed up in the gulf of social dissolution, and see their heritage pass to Fore-Christian hands. But the duty is difficult to fulfil even for the most Christian of rulers; and to restore in Europe and America the ancient union of Church and State seems a hopeless task "unless Providence interposed by an effusion of Divine grace on the hearts of men, which would amount to a miracle and perhaps would interfere with human responsibility".[4]

But toleration of evil is not approval, and the supreme principles, which Christianity proclaimed from the first, no new circumstances in our mode of life, no new discoveries in physical science, no new analysis of man's reasoning process, can alter one whit. Therefore with our lot cast in the midst of those to whom the world seems

> a darkling plain
> Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
> Where ignorant armies clash by night,

let us hear the words of our Master, the doctrine of light and order set out face to face against the doctrine of darkness and confusion:—

"That there is a truth then; that there is one truth; that religious error is in itself of an immoral nature; that its maintainers, unless involuntarily such, are guilty in maintaining it; that it is to be dreaded; that the search for truth is not the gratification of curiosity; that its attainment has nothing of the excitement of a discovery; that the mind is below truth, not above it, and is bound, not to descant upon it, but to venerate it; that truth and falsehood are set before us for the trial of our hearts; that our choice is an awful giving forth of lots on which salvation or rejection is inscribed; that 'be-

[1] See the letter in *The Times*, 26th Nov., 1904, from its Vienna correspondent.

[2] Compare, for example, two substantial tradesmen, one an Englishman at Oxford and another a Hindu at Benares. Forty pages would not suffice to explain the diversities of the legal and social position of the two; the Englishman having a voice in the management and taxation, and free of the run, of the Empire; the Hindu with life-long disabilities in both respects; but in local government the Hindu in no worse, perhaps in a better position than the Englishman; and his religion protected not penalised.

[3] *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, § 6.

[4] *Ibid.*

fore all things it is necessary to hold the Catholic faith'; that 'he that would be saved must thus think,' and not otherwise; that, 'if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding, if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasure, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God,'—this is the dogmatical principle, which has strength.

"That truth and falsehood in religion are but matter of opinion; that one doctrine is as good as another; that the Governor of the world does not intend that we should gain the truth; that there is no truth; that we are not more acceptable to God by believing this than by believing that; that no one is answerable for his opinions; that they are a matter of necessity or accident; that it is enough if we sincerely hold what we profess; that our merit lies in seeking not in possessing; that it is a duty to follow what seems to us true, without a fear lest it should not be true; that it may be a gain to succeed, and can be no harm to fail; that we may take up and lay down opinions at pleasure; that belief belongs to the mere intellect, not to the heart also; that we may safely trust to ourselves in matters of Faith, and need no other guide—this is the principle of philosophies and heresies, which is very weakness."[1]

These things being so, who among us would so cower with belated terror, as to leave the steadfast rock, to surrender the principle of strength, and to give himself over to the principle of weakness, at the very moment when the weakness is growing daily more evident among the After-Christian populations, grasping at present pleasure, craving for excitement, abounding in negations, failing in convictions, uncertain in opinions, terrified at pain, shrinking at sacrifice. Are we to yield to men like these, and not rather, forgetting any present weakness, to stretch forth our hands with joyful hope towards the future? For the future belongs to the children of the martyrs, not to the children of Voltaire.

[1] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, chap. viii., § 1.

CHAPTER VIII.

HERETICS AND SCHISMATICS.

63. HORROR OF DISUNION IN THE EARLY CHURCH.

We have counted as the eighth antinomy that the Church is one and yet Christendom has ever been divided.

The unity of the Church is perhaps of all her characteristics the most important and august. In the solemn and effectual prayer of her Founder it is made the very note and evidence of her divinity: "I pray for those also who through their word shall believe in Me; that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me". And the apostle amid his bonds exhorted his converts to be true to their vocation, to be one body and one spirit as became those who confessed one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. Here is a principle fundamental and unchangeable: there were not to be two Churches and two Christs, but one; not two folds and two shepherds, but one.

And unity being thus made the very evidence of Divinity, it is not surprising that those who chose for themselves a separate doctrine or separate authority, leaving the straight path of orthodoxy and obedience, were regarded by the faithful with the utmost horror as involved in the extremity of wickedness. They were as those who wilfully obscured the light of the sun in the heavens; they were held and denounced as the ministers of Satan; and the strongest epithets to show abhorrence of them have Scripture warrant.[1] For they made a breach in that order which the providence of God had placed in the world to be the special witness of His handiwork; and by darkening the light of the one faith and one Mediator, darkened the evidence for the unity of God. They sought to render and tear the mystical body of Christ, the Church being recognised as the body of which Christ was the head.

For us in these present days it is difficult to grasp the repulsion felt by the

[1] 2 Corinth. xi. 13, 15; Galat. i. 9; 1 Tim. i. 10, 11, 19, 20, iv. 1, 2; 2 Tim. ii. 16, iii. 8, 13; 2 Peter ii. 1, 3, 10; 2 John 7; Jude 8, 12, 13.

early Christians towards heresy and schism—we, from whom the supernatural gifts (*charismata*) of the early Church have long since departed; we, to whom the spectacle of great bodies of heretics and schismatics has become familiar; we, among whom it is the exception and not the rule that heresy or schism is the responsible act of the individual dissident, not an irresponsible inheritance; we, to whom the good life and pious deeds of our separated brethren are often accurately known; we, who gladly grasp at the welcome possibility that only in name and appearance are they outside the membership of the visible Church, but in reality are invisible members. Yet deliberate and formal breach of unity remains what it was, even to this day; and against its authors and abettors the Church ceases not and will never cease to pronounce her anathema.[1] Only mark, it is she herself and none other, her own corporate voice and none other to speak the words of reprobation; nor may her individual children, unauthorised and unbidden, attribute self-deceit to their fellow-men, or wilful blindness, or diabolical delusion.[2]

64. FACTS OF HERESY AND SCHISM.

But the notable fact remains, that the light of the Church through nineteen centuries has been obscured, sometimes more, sometimes less, but always obscured by a persistent mass of heresy and schism. The true Church is like a brilliant star that yet in her sublime orbit through the heavens has been incessantly accompanied by a cloud of varying dimensions and density, borrowing its light from her rays, and interposing between them and this lower earth a nebulous screen, so that they reach us as the feeble illuminations of the cold and misty north rather than as the strong sunshine of the south.

Already (pp. 19-21) I have spoken on the fact and its fitness, that in Divine things we live under the law not of sight but of search. So it has been from the beginning of the Christian record, under the old law as well as under the new. False pretences are ever found that deceive at first sight, confuse the evidence, perplex the inquirer, false miracles, false prophets, specious schisms, a temple not on the holy hill of Jerusalem alone, but also on Mount Gerizim, specious counterfeits, seducers who must be plausible or they could not seduce, ravening wolves who could not enter were they not clad in sheep's clothing, the repeated uprising of "bold, plausible, imposing counter-claims on the part of error".[3] "From the first the Church was but one Communion among many which bore the name of Christian, some of them more learned, and others affecting a greater strictness than herself." Hence by an historical induction we conclude that, taking men as they are, corruptions of the Gospel are a necessary phenomenon, no less than its total acceptance or total rejection; and that "large organised, flourishing, imposing communions, which strike the imagination as necessary portions of the heritage of Christ," may yet be corporately reprobate, as being corporately involved in heresy or schism, and as a body not gathering with Christ but scattering abroad, without part in the Redeemer, albeit the individual members even by thousands or tens of thousands may be invisibly united to Him, and invisibly standing within the one sacred fold. Such *simulacra* or phantom Churches were the Donatists with 400 episcopal sees, and the Novatians whose stern discipline stretched from Rome to Scythia, from Spain to Asia Minor, and the multitudinous Gnostics who for long held the great St. Augustine under the spell of their seeming wisdom, and the Arians who reigned over Gaul and Iberia and Africa and Italy, till the days of Gregory the Great, and the Nestorians who for centuries had all further Asia to themselves, besides their establishments in

[1] As this book is only for candid readers it is scarcely needful to point out, that doctrinal disputes among the children of the Church, and their diversities of theological views, rather make stronger than weaker the unity of the Church, and are no breach of it. For they involve agreement in the common doctrines of faith, on which each bases his own contention; just as litigation implies the principles of law and the prevalence of order without which a decision could neither be reached nor enforced. See the whole matter treated in *Anglican Difficulties*, Lecture x.

[2] So Pius IX. in his allocution of December, 1854, explained how "it is held as certain that those labouring under invincible ignorance of the true religion are not in this matter blameworthy in the eyes of God. And who is the man so presumptuous as himself to lay down, according to national, local or personal character and a host of other circumstances, the limits of this ignorance?"—See the original in Denzinger's *Enchiridion*, n. 1504.

[3] *Anglican Difficulties*, Lecture xi., whence is drawn much that follows.

hither Asia, and the Monophysites in Syria and Egypt (great centres of population and intelligence before the Mahometan blight), and the Greek schism, that cut off from the Church the most learned and wealthy of her subjects, and the Albigenses who culled the first-fruits of the new reign of culture and riches in the fairest regions of Europe, and the vast if ill-united bodies of Lutherans and Calvinists, and the two Churches, that having identified themselves with two vigorous nations, the Russian and the English, have grown with their growth and made the national triumphs their own.

And besides these imposing claimants for recognition as part of Christ's Church, smaller sects almost innumerable have sprung up age after age; and a great book would be needed merely to register briefly the names and chief tenets of the many dissidents from Catholic unity.

65. ORIGINS AND PATHOLOGY.

Here is a wide field for pathological study, to trace the causes and development of these morbid growths; not to be appalled by their multiplicity, nor confused by the manifold diversity of their surroundings, as Syria in the fourth century, Provence in the twelfth, or Great Britain in the twentieth; and to classify all heretical and schismatical varieties on some intelligible principle.

In general they mark a departure from the golden mean of Catholic teaching. The heretical spirit falls into excess on one side or the other; leaning in practice either to rigorism or to laxity; and in theory laying too much stress on some particular doctrines, too little on others, "it being almost a definition of heresy that it fastens on some one statement as if the whole truth, to the denial of all others, and as the basis of a new faith";[1] thus distorting both what it holds and what it rejects, as neither can be understood without the other. It takes one aspect for the whole aspect, as though a mere part was intelligible without the whole.

Hence we find the hallowed doctrines of Christian faith distorted into a thousand caricatures. All the weaknesses of our fallen nature, all our manifold passions, all the varieties of self-deceit, applied to Christian truths can act each as a mirror of distortion; every man is in potentiality, though not in act, a heretic, some part of him intolerant of certain spiritual truths; so that a keen-sighted spiritual physician could pronounce, not that he would fall, but that if he fell, he would fall in one particular direction rather than in another. And the same inclination towards a particular fall, each man towards his *σύμφυτον κακόν*, may apply to bodies of men as well as to individuals, and may render particular points of discipline or doctrine uncongenial to particular nations at particular stages of their development. Even apart from this, the miserable antagonism of nationalities, their mutual scorn or antipathy, one main obstacle, as we saw in the fourth chapter, to the spread of the Gospel, is a dangerous occasion of religious dissidence; and often a heresy or schism has behind it the assertion of nationality against the despised or envied or hated foreigner—so of Copts against Greeks, of Byzantines against Franks, of fourteenth century Czechs against Germans, of nineteenth century Germans against Czechs, of Russians against Poles.

Then in the recondite realm of spiritual theology, if the interior is disunited from the exterior, or the one is dwelt on to the neglect of and the depression of the other, the material for heresy is at hand. So the Jansenistic doctrine that perfection (a perfection that is on the Index) consists in doing what we dislike, that our affections and passions will never be brought to like the things of God or be in harmony with grace. This ancient and Puritanical abhorrence of the sense-world as radically evil and hostile to the spiritual life, and the opposite (Monophysite) error that confounded Nature with Spirit, external with internal—both these extremes were excluded by the true Christian spirit which teaches us that Nature is the instrument of our healing as of our hurt: "Peccat caro; mundat caro". Unconquered and blindly obeyed, Nature stands as an impenetrable barrier between man and God; conquered and brought under the will, it becomes the organ of the divinity, the channel of communication between spirit and spirit; not merely symbolising but effecting what it symbolises.

Again, instead of the golden mean of the Church between instability and immobility (to be treated in the next chapter) heresy and schism fall into the extremes. Thus many heresies are those of impatience, the work of men who claim to know better and wish to advance faster

[1] *Oxford University Sermons*, Sermon xv.

than the authorities of the Church; anticipating prematurely what the Church is about to say, and saying it incorrectly, so that it is changed into a grotesque foreshadow of true statements that are to come when the time is at last ripe for the new enunciation of an old truth. So Tertullian, and again Sabellius, tried of themselves to correct the errors that the Church was to correct later; and fell into heresy as the consequence of their attempt. So the Gnostics anticipated the intellectual theology of St. Irenæus, St. Athanasius, and St. Augustine; and marred it by their anticipation. So Apollinaris was beforehand in the work of St. Cyril and of the Council of Ephesus; and beforehand to his own ruin. So Abelard, premature and self-willed in his novelties, could not separate the dross from the ore, and went wrong with the very instrument of scholastic philosophy that was to be turned afterwards, under the guidance of the Church, to such glorious issues.[1] And once more the beautiful austerity of St. Francis and his followers can be traced in unsightly anticipation among the penitential but heretical Montanists.[2] Not as though truth varied with the times; but our aptitude for understanding and expressing the truth varies; to be untimely is in a sense and in effect to be untruthful, and to be one whom it is the duty of those in authority to silence.[3]

On the other hand we find heresies lagging behind, rejecting development, clinging to an obsolete discipline that may be a present heresy, harking back from the living present to early ages, and by a fossilised antiquarianism converting the Church into a Record Office of ancient decisions, incapable of facing any new questions. So the Britons clinging to the obsolete rule of Easter, the Lutheran appeal to the early Church, the Jansenist and "Old Catholic" appeal to Christian antiquity.

But why dwell further on these and other morbid conditions, on the uncertainty and endless variation of heretical doctrines, the continuous tending to split into independent bodies unless restrained by the hand of the State, their one common bond being hatred of the Church as their one common antagonist, the common target of their vituperation. For these features have already sixty years ago been traced by a master hand.[4]

66. *VIA MEDIA* IN CARICATURE.

Let this alone be still added, one more instance of marvellous distortion. For even the characteristic attitude of the Church, as the calm centre and golden mean between opposing errors, has not been exempt from caricature; and the specious appearance of a *via media* has been made a mask for heretical latitudinarianism. This variety of theological error has borrowed from practical politics the methods of compromise, mutual concession, give and take; admirable in practical politics where all is involved in the concrete, every case a special case; but inadmissible in science or theology —like interposing between the extremes of Ptolemy and Galileo a *via media*, that the earth goes round the sun from Mondays to Wednesdays, and the sun round the earth from Thursdays to Saturdays, and on the Sundays alternately. So the Catholic doctrine is taken (by an extreme misrepresentation) as an extreme on one side, and some heretical doctrine like that of Arius—bold, keen, stern and violent Arius—on the other side, and a mean taken between them, like Semi-Arianism (or Eusebianism), a compromise dear to the civil power that desires peace at any price, that lacks understanding of the point at issue, that holds to dogmatic truths so loosely as to be ready to accept or modify or abandon them to suit any present convenience—even the fundamental truth that Christ is ever and was ever truly God. But from the very nature of the case such benevolent neutrality is impossible; to admit nine-tenths of Catholic doctrine as true is all-unavailing if one-tenth is to be abandoned as erroneous, and an infallible Church forced to admit her fallibility. "Not to submit to the Church is to oppose her, and to side with the heretical party; for medium there is none."[5]

So this specious error alike in the fourth century of the Semi-Arians, in the fifth of the Monophysites, in the seventeenth of the Anglicans, is marked by the same characteristics; "the drama of religion and the combat of truth and error were ever one and the same". The Church

[1] Newman, *Historical Sketches*, "Rise of Universities," chap. xvi.

[2] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, chap. viii., § 1.

[3] *Apologia*, chap. v., p. 295, edit. 1865.

[4] See *Development of Christian Doctrine*, especially chap. v., § 2, and chap. vi., § 11.

[5] *Anglican Difficulties*, Lecture xii.

in each case "might be called peremptory and stern, resolute, overbearing and relentless; and heretics were shifting, changeable, reserved and deceitful, ever courting the civil power, and never agreeing together, except by its aid; and the civil power was ever aiming at comprehensions, trying to put the invisible out of view, and to substitute expediency for faith".[1]

Thus in this kind, as in all other heresies, the human spirit can be discerned at war with the Divine; man asserting against God his own self-will.

Yet after all, however accurate the psychological and historical study of these morbid growths, the mere knowledge of how all has come about is scarcely more consoling than to know amid the afflictions of illness the causes and medical diagnosis of our complaint; and we are still stricken with grief at the multitude and persistence of those who remain in dismal twilight or outer darkness. Some of this trouble is irremediable, being indeed a part of the general problem of evil; why the whole world is not yet Christian being as much a problem as why the whole of Christendom is not yet Catholic; we must humble ourselves before a mystery, before the fact of darkness being in some way the inseparable concomitant of light, before the fact of evil being in some way the pre-requisite and counterpart of good.

But still some of our grief at the division of Christendom can be lessened by duly appraising the disaster.

67. INVISIBLE MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCH, AND CHRISTIAN FAMILY LIFE OF DISSIDENTS.

Let us then remember that the multitude outside the visible unity of the Church are no homogeneous body, but comprise the greatest variety in doctrine, ranging from those who scarcely hold any Christian belief (like the Manicheans of old or the Unitarians of to-day) to those who hold the greater part of the Christian creed (like the Greek Church of the eleventh century or a portion of the Anglican Church of to-day). And in personal characteristics we see still greater diversity—from apostates and heresiarchs, like Julian or Arius, arch-foes of Christ, to the simple-minded Christian, living up to his lights, like the Arian Visigoth in the middle of the sixth century or the Puritan New Englander in the middle of the eighteenth century. A stream may issue from an upland city foul with manifold impurities and repulsive to the very sight; but let it flow through miles of woodland and meadow, and with each mile it loses more and more of its foulness; it cannot recover indeed the unsullied freshness of its mountain source, but at least has become clear and clean. And thus immense populations may live in the realms of disunion and yet peacefully garner much of the harvest of the Christian faith; and if the glorious road of supernatural sanctity is not to be trodden by their feet, they can at least walk in the commoner way that leads to salvation, all the more easily if they preserve, as eighty million Russians have preserved, the Christian sacraments. Nor have unappointed judges any right to limit, according to their fancy, the uncovenanted mercies of God, or to restrict the exuberant numbers of those who bear the appearance of aliens or even of enemies to God's Church, but in reality are her invisible members—invisible on earth but visible from on high.

And lest we be lost in generalities and fail to grasp what sort of home life can be reached by imperfect Christianity, let us turn once more to Le Play's great collection of monographs,[2] and read the account by MM. Coronel and Allan of the fishermen and crofters of the island of Marken in Holland in the year 1862 (vol. iii., chap. v.). They were a church-going, Bible-reading community, the children given a religious education, parents receiving, with scarce an exception, respect and obedience, mothers devoted to the training of their children, illegitimate children rare, and the fault always repaired by the subsequent marriage of their parents. There was freedom of choice in marriage, mutual affection between husband and wife; and divorce, though permitted by their civil law and by their Calvinist religion (they followed the Synod of Dordrecht of 1618), was unknown in practice; nay even second marriages were rare, for to continue in widowhood was held a form of conjugal fidelity. The same simple observance of all the Christianity they knew, and the same happy and healthy family life, were to be found among the Lutheran lute-makers of the Erzgebirge in Saxony (vol. iii., chap. ii., § xxii.), and much good was to be found in the family life of the Lutheran Swedes in 1845 (vol. iii., chap.

[1] *Anglican Difficulties*, Lecture xii.

[2] *Les Ouvriers Européens*, edit. 1879, in six vols.

i.), of the Russian peasants in 1853 (vol. ii., chap. ii.), and of the Bulgarians in 1848 (vol. ii., chap. vi.).

Nor was England, at least twenty years ago, without many examples of the Christian family, such as the household of the Shropshire small farmer (described in detail in *The Nineteenth Century*, Oct., 1884), church-going, God-fearing, Bible-reading (a chapter read daily after the morning meal), and displaying order, discipline and union. Such a family showed a character akin to that of those Dutch and Saxon peasants just named, and the character was Christian. Nay in all ranks, not merely in the healthier sphere of rural handwork, but amid the snares of wealth and of cities, who of us has come to the years of later life and has not gathered in his memory a garland of Christian lives, though they seemed to stand outside the one fold of Christ, or who has not exclaimed, as the sweet legend tells of Pope Gregory, *non Angli sed Angeli?* Truly there are fields white for the harvest, and if as yet there is no reaper, on whom is the blame to fall if not on such as ourselves, unworthy, dull and torpid members of a light-bearing life-giving Head?

68. PROVIDENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF HERESY AND SCHISM.

Still when all has been said that can be said in reason to mitigate the horror of heresy and schism, there remains an irreducible minimum that would appal us, did we not see, as a merciful Providence allows us to see, the purpose for which they are permitted, and their almost necessary function to promote the life and vigour of the very Church they would destroy.

Never has the action of man been so visibly over-ridden by the action of Providence; never has the saying *sic vos non vobis* been more conspicuously applicable; never have captives laboured so hard to build the walls of fortress or palace for their captors, as these rebels have laboured all unwittingly to build up the walls of the new Jerusalem, the intellectual temple of God. Instead of Christian doctrine being put forth from the beginning in all its fulness, and heresy and schism forestalled and precluded, they have been turned to good purpose to draw forth by their contradiction the conclusions of Catholic theology, and indicate the value of certain truths by their very opposition to them. Thus truths have been brought out one by one and fitted into their places; one region of Christian doctrine after another has been lit up by a supernatural searchlight; and great dogmas, such as concern the Eternal Generation of the Word, the reality of the Sacred Humanity, the singleness of Christ's Person, the duality of His Natures, the glories of Mary for the sake of her Son; or again touching Christ's Soul and Sacramental Flesh, His two Wills, His Church and the gifts of Grace—each in due course and in due time has been irradiated.[1]

In St. Augustine's words, no one would discover, for no one would discuss, unless roused by the blows of misrepresentation. For while heretics misrepresent, the little ones are scandalised. . . . Truth would not be sought so industriously had it no enemies to oppose it with falsehood.[2] And thus "Theodore of Mopsuestia, Julian of Eclanum, Calvin and Strauss, have not been without their usefulness. An able adversary, sincere in his error and skilful in maintaining it, is in the long run a boon to the cause of religion. The greatness of the error is the measure of the triumph of truth. The intellectual armour with which the doctrine of the Church is assailed becomes the trophy of her victory. All her battles are defensive, but they all terminate in conquest."[3]

Heresy and schism are therefore almost a condition of the Church's life, and for these seemingly unwelcome intruders we find in history their proper place and proper explanation.

[1] *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, Discourse xvii., and Faber's *Blessed Sacrament*, bk. iii., § vi.

[2] *Serm. ad pop.*, lib. xi.

[3] *The Rambler*, 1858, vol. x., p. 103.

CHAPTER IX.

DEVELOPMENT.

69. UPRISING OF THE HISTORICAL SPIRIT.

We have counted as the ninth antinomy that the Church is ever the same yet ever changing.

Historical study and archæology have made the notion familiar to recent generations that past ages were profoundly different in their habits and ways of expression and thoughts from the present,

and that to learn to understand them is as difficult a task as to acquire a new language or to learn to understand the ways and sentiments of a foreign country.

To have established this truth, to have, so to speak, created the historical sense, is the glory of the German historical school of the early nineteenth century;[1] to have ignored it in law and economics is the reproach of the English analytical school of jurisprudence (Bentham and Austin conspicuous among them), and still more of the English school of political economy that even to the seventies remained unhistorical.

But then the very effort to correct an error in one direction impelled the historical school into an error in the opposite direction—so hard is it to keep the balance, so hard for a man daily occupied with upholding the *relative* character of human desires, beliefs, political and social constitutions, daily urging how they are variable according to race, education, traditions, knowledge, religion, climate and wealth, daily explaining that there are no hard and fast lines of division, but a continuous transition from one set of social actions to another, and that things generally are involved, mutually implicated and continuous—it is hard for a man daily occupied in this manner to recognise simultaneously that behind the relative there is the absolute, behind the variable there is the constant, behind the continuous there is the opposed; and that otherwise all is chaos, and the sciences, historical science among them, impossible

Once more then the doctrine of the golden mean is our salvation and one-sidedness our ruin. We have to do with change indeed (whether called γένεσις, *Werden*, or evolution), but with something more than change. We cannot understand the past if we have naught in common with the past. We cannot understand Homer if we hear not as he heard, or if the same sun that lit his world lights not ours. The ideal without the historical is indeed empty: but the historical without the ideal is blind.[2] We must avoid superfluous definitions, delusive clearness, greater precision than the subject-matter allows; and in drawing lines we must take manifold care. But we must draw them. Else in our efforts to avoid formality and over-precision we efface all distinctions, become incoherent, and can neither learn nor teach. It is difficult to name a precise moment when night-time has begun. Are day and night then indistinguishable? It is difficult to lay down clearly when a trade commission becomes dishonest. Is there no difference then between an honest man and a rogue? The surroundings are of almost indescribable variety, but the same daily comedies and daily tragedies of human life are reproduced by the same human nature whether witnessed by Hammurabi, by Aeschylus, by Juvenal, by the Minnesingers, by Shakespeare, or by ourselves; and the accidental diversity is linked together by essential similarity.

70. GROWTH OF THE THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT.

These elements of historical logic have been repeated that we may better understand how the Catholic Church is the same now as at any time, how she is of unchanged identity, and yet in appearance most different; how she is rigid and yet flexible; how she has been exposed to the opposite and plausible charges of changing, corrupting, augmenting by human inventions the Divine message, and yet of clinging obstinately to antiquated positions, unchangeable in error, a fossil amid living organisms.

The explanation of these paradoxes is to be found in the theory of development of the doctrine, constitution and discipline of the Christian Church. Prematurely outlined in the fifth century by an obscure Gallic monk, Vincent of Lerins, the theory, though not unrecognised or contested, slept and could not but have slept for many centuries; and although foreshadowed by Petavius and others in their efforts to meet the Protestant appeal to history,[3] it could hardly take shape and be worked out till first in secular science the historical method and spirit had gained a foothold.

An age steeped in anachronisms, when for example Jerusalem was depicted by the Flemish painters of the fifteenth century as if it were a contemporary walled city of Flanders, or when the heroes of Greece and Rome appeared on the classical

[1] See Willmann, *Geschichte des Idealismus*, vol. iii., 1897, chap. xvii., on the Historical Principle.

[2] See Willmann, *ibid.*, p. 708, echoing Trendelenburg and Eucken.

[3] J. Tixeront, *La Théologie Ante-nicéenne* (being the first volume of *Histoire des Dogmas*), Paris, 1905, p. 12. See also the Literary Notes in *The Tablet* of 14th September, 1904, for the text and translation of the passage on development in Blessed John Fisher's answer to Luther.

French stage duly attired with the wig and the robes of the time of Louis XIV. —in ages like these the theory of development was out of place and premature. Indeed we must admit the paradox that the only refuge for truth was in error; for the erroneous notion that the Church in the early centuries was in appearance just like the existing Church—the Pope surrounded by his Cardinals, missions and retreats habitual methods of devotion, Easter confession and Communion the test of submission and allegiance—this outer coating of historical misapprehension preserved the essential truth that the Church of Gregory and Innocent was one and the same as the Church of the Fathers and of the early martyrs, identical with the Church of the Apostles, the one faithful witness of the one Christ, the one sure bulwark of the belief in an all-holy, all-wise and omnipotent God.

But when the time came for historical studies to flourish, and anachronisms ceased to serve any longer any useful purpose, and documentary history showed a striking variety in the expressions of Christian doctrine, the methods of Church government, and the forms of Christian devotion, the man arose, by God's providence, to show that, as in other matters, so in the life of the Church, there was no divorce between nature and grace; that the ordinary growth of natural societies and of human doctrines was not reversed or utterly changed in the case of the Christian Church, only supernaturally guided; and that here also we must distinguish between constants and variables, between immobility in dogma and progress in our apprehension of it, between objective truth and subjective knowledge, between the permanent or essential and the temporary or accidental, between changes as the outriders of growth and changes as the heralds of decay and dissolution. Need indeed there was to make these sovereign distinctions, and in a highly complex matter to beware of fatal indiscrimination.

Then John Henry Newman in the great crisis of his life, his period of storm and stress, and to weather the storm, wrote his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine;* faced boldly the problems for which history demanded a solution, and upheld the grand thesis that the modern Catholic faith was not merely historically but logically the representative of the ancient faith, and that all the manifold changes from the day of Pentecost to that hour were not departures, undoings, corruptions, but the natural growth and lawful development of the idea of theChurch, showing preservation of type, continuity of principles, logical sequence, the power of assimilation, its beginnings anticipating its future, its later phenomena being protective of its past, and itself vigorous in its action from first to last.[1]

At length the foundations were laid for a history of dogma that should be based on true methods and admit no mistaken presuppositions; and by a timely anticipation the process was discovered whereby the young and vigorous trees of unregenerate history, like Prof. Harnack's *History of Dogma*, bringing forth only bitter and unwholesome fruit, could serve as stocks whereon to graft a germ that would bring forth the sweet and wholesome fruit of Christian science.

71. EXPLANATION OF THE THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT.

In popular language the account of the development of Christian doctrine is as follows: There are truths which are not upon the surface of the legacy of revelation made to the Apostles, "but which from time to time are brought into form by theologians, and sometimes have been proposed to the faithful by the Church as direct objects of faith". They are not deduced in their fulness and exactness from the belief of the first centuries, but under the guidance of a Divine voice are "the new form, explanation, transformation or carrying out of what in substance was held from the first, what the Apostles said, but have not recorded in writing, or would have said under our circumstances, or if they had been asked, or in view of certain uprisings of error, and in that sense being really portions of the legacy of truth of which the Church . . . is the divinely appointed trustee".[2]

In other words, what has been said once is never unsaid, but said with more accurate definition, more completely, nearer the truth as it exists in the Divine mind; so that we understand more clearly and can state explicitly what before was only held implicitly. The course of centuries must run before all the bearings and consequences of a doctrine are perceived and adopted. Indeed it is precisely the work of Christian thought to take possession of the primi-

[1] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, chap. v.
[2] *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, § 8.

tive data of revelation and illuminate, fertilise, unfold, co-ordinate them, without altering the substance or modifying the doctrinal foundation. From the outset the sacred doctrine started on its course of development: the Epistles of St. Paul, and the Gospel of St. John already display what may be called a development of the three Synoptic Gospels; and to take a later example, the great conflicts of the third century regarding penitential discipline brought out clearly two dogmatic results—first, a more distinct consciousness in the Church of her power to pardon every sort of sin; secondly, a clearer view that of this power the ecclesiastical hierarchy was the sole depositary, and of its application the sole judge.[1] Then on the eve of Arianism we can take stock of the points whither Christian doctrine had reached before the great crisis that was imminent had clarified many obscurities, dissipated many confusions, and shown the full consequences of many truths. For example, the famous word ὁμοούσιος was already known in part; but it needed St. Athanasius to arise before it could be known in all its fulness.[2]

Thus the formula *quod semper quod ubique quod ab omnibus*, namely that a doctrine to be true must have been taught in the Church always, everywhere and by all, is liable like many another formula to be perverted into a misunderstanding. "Dogma is not a set of dead crystallised notions, only the verbal setting of which can ever be changed, as though one were to move a collection of minerals from one case and rearrange them in another, but lives and thrives as an infant growing to manhood—to the measure of the full stature of Christ (Eph. iv. 13)."[3] What was obscure at first, what was latent at first, what was germinal at first, had to be made clear in later times and explicit, and adult; not all indeed or all at once, but whatsoever and whensoever it might seem pleasing to the Holy Spirit, whose presence—such is the fundamental claim of the Church—perpetually guides her, when she takes counsel, and will not suffer her official deliberation ever to issue in error. Errors indeed have often, and must have often, been taught *within* the Church but not *by* the Church. Errors have been the providential builders of truth. Errors have been needful, and the fire of contradiction, to separate the ore from the dross, and to cause a doctrine to be distinctly elaborated in thought and enunciated in set formula. Errors concerning Christ and the Holy Trinity were the proximate occasions of the decrees of Nicæa, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon. Similarly, the opposition to the primacy of the Holy See was the very food that fed its development: the opposition of Africa in the third century, of Byzantium in the ninth, of France in the seventeenth, bore witness to the truth they opposed, and prepared a doctrine not to be formulated in its full distinctness till the days of our fathers.

And so in general the history of dogma presents three stages, first, implicit and vague; secondly, imperfectly thought out, inaccurately stated, arousing and in part rightly arousing opposition; thirdly, accurately and explicitly formulated. The best of men may be in opposition to dogma in the first and second stages: only in the third stage it becomes a test whether they are the children of self-will or of obedience.

72. CHANGES IN DISCIPLINE AND DEVOTION.

If in dogma we find the changes expressed by the word development, still more so in discipline and devotion. "There was a time when a priest as a matter of private devotion might say seven or more Masses in a day; there have been other times when Mass was rarely said by any one but a bishop. For more than 1000 years the practice of visiting the Blessed Sacrament or of Benediction was unknown; but these things are now the very life of Catholic devotion. . . . The penances of many years' duration, familiar in the early ages, have long since fallen into desuetude."[4] The reign of canonical penances has been succeeded by the reign of indulgences. The devotion to St. Joseph, so conspicuous in the modern Church, lay dormant for centuries till Gerson was raised up to be its theologian, St. Teresa its saint, St. Francis of Sales its popular teacher.[5]

And these changes are partly the fruit and expression of development of doctrine, such as the outburst of devotion

[1] Tixeront, *Histoire des Dogmas, La Théologie Ante-nicéenne*, 1905, p. 330.
[2] *Ibid.*, chap. xv.
[3] Rickaby, *Development*, 1905, pp. 18, 19.
[4] Fr. H. Thurston in *The Tablet*, 15th April, 1905.
[5] Faber, *Blessed Sacrament*, bk. ii., § v.

to the Blessed Virgin after the council of Ephesus, when there was no longer risk of this devotion obscuring the Divinity of Christ; or when some new aspect of the Incarnation is realised that before had never struck the mind of the faithful, like the devotion to the Holy Name in the fifteenth century and to the Sacred Heart in the seventeenth; partly they are the answer of a divinely illuminated soul-saver to the ever-changing needs of the souls to be saved. Because the world changes in each age the Church must be in a perpetual condition of adaptation, if she is ever to remain the same healer of the nations, to deal with each generation in its own way, to meet its peculiar temptations and difficulties, to be its efficacious guide. Variety and growth of new devotions, far then from being contrary to her sameness, are the very fruits of it. Not that all are wise, all good, all approved: far from it; and just as certain doctrines held at any given time by some of the faithful are imperfect or unsound, and in process of correction or elimination, even so with devotions; and they require perpetual watchfulness and the guiding hand of authority, lest they become involved in human corruption.

73. CARICATURES OF DEVELOPMENT.

Nay, the very principle of development of doctrine is itself capable of abuse and excess.

It is one thing to say that the unchanging dogma of the Church has to be presented to man's finite intelligence in a language and manner which he can understand, that "it is the special function of an infallible Church—invested with infallibility by its Divine Author for the purpose—at once to preserve the essential dogma unchanged and to present it afresh to each succeeding age in the language which that age best understands"[1]—it is quite another thing to repeat the (condemned) proposition of Günther: "In time by the progress of science, a new sense may have to be assigned to dogmas proposed by the Church, different from that which the Church has hitherto understood and at present understands". This is not the growth of a sapling oak into the king of the forest, or the change of a young law student by the lapse of years into a judge, or the completion of an unfinished building according to its original plan, or the deduction of conclusions from the premises in which though hidden, they are already contained; but rather the change of an oak into a pine, of one man into another, a substitution of a new building for an old, an addition not to mere conclusions but to the original premisses. So in the earlier times of the Church the Gnostics pretended to substitute a loftier knowledge (γνῶσις) for the common faith. Eloquence and learning, joined to an austere life, seemed to guarantee the truth of this plausible philosophy of Christianity, this profounder intelligence of the Christian faith, that yet was an attempt to change the work of God into the work of man.[2]

Such was no development of Christian faith but would have been its destruction.

Another ground of error is to compare the old dispensation with the new, and by a false analogy to bracket together the course of the Christian Church and the course of the Jewish Synagogue. But between the Old Testament and the New there is a fundamental distinction. Dogma had reached a definite term in the New Testament; nothing essential remained to be revealed; and a sacred deposit was entrusted to a doctrinal authority; truths that could receive development only and not alteration. Whereas in the Old Testament there was no infallible doctrinal authority, and if we use the word development at all in its regard in the sense explained in this chapter, we must instantly add, that there was much more than development. For we can trace a progressive revelation, a gradual increase of light, till the time was ready for the full and final daylight of Christianity. Excellent and Divine, so far as it went, the Old Law brought nothing to perfection till Christ came. But when He had come and by coming had brought grace and truth, there was no need to wait for any development before soaring upwards to the highest flights of contemplation, or in outward action doing the most heroic deeds for Christ. The sacred dogma had from the first its full power; and all the after developments, admirable and needful as they have been, the fairest fruit of the God-given gift of reason guided by the Spirit of Love, are but the

[1] Review in *The Times*, 30th Oct., 1903, of Wilfrid Ward's *Problems and Persons*, a volume that contains among other good things the admirable paper on "Unchanging Dogma and Changeful Man".

[2] Tixeront, *La Théologie Anténicéenne*, chap. iv., § 4.

unfolding of the faith of the first Christians, the belief in Christ truly crucified, in Christ truly risen from the dead. Greatly should we err if we thought development was a mere natural intellectual process of dialectic, without Divine guidance and practical import for our spiritual life; but no less should we err if we thought the simple, undeveloped, undifferentiated Christianity of the first Christians was the simplicity of ignorance; or that their lack of explicit formulas was a lack of certainty in their faith.

74. IMPORTANCE OF THE THEORY.

But although the theory of development cannot escape, like all else in our feeble hands, a liability of perversion, it is a theory now perhaps more than ever of supreme importance. Every epoch has its providential task; and just as the centuries from the third to the fifth and again the twelfth and the thirteenth displayed a philosophical development of the faith; so it may be the task of the twentieth century to display an exegetical development, namely, to apply the resources of our time and historical methods to the study of the Bible. Nor need any Christian fear lest the Church be unequal to the task, and the sacred deposit become as spoil for the spoilers. For she who shrank not from the construction of an intellectual theology, though the false science of the Gnostics might seem to have discredited the attempt, is not to be held back from her course, is not to be hindered in the providential development of her exegesis, by the scarecrow of rationalistic criticism; and the new Gnostics, who show in many ways a singular resemblance to the old, are constructing with their tools of scholarship and criticism, through the rocks and morasses of history, a level causeway, not for the triumphal chariot of a higher Gnosis, but for the humble tread of Christian footsteps.[1]

Thus the theory of development solves the problem of an unchanging Church in a changing world, of a Church that preserves the golden mean between heretical instability and schismatical immobility. If a correct report could be drawn up of some great centre of Catholic life, at intervals of 300 years, to show the theoretical truths explicitly taught, and the Christian life actually lived; and starting at Rome or Antioch in the year 100, if we examined them again in the year 400, and Rome or London in the years 700, 1000 and 1300, and Rome or Vienna in 1600 and 1900, a long volume would scarce suffice to enumerate the differences. And yet the Church proclaims herself all the while to be the same, and rightly. For these very differences are the witness of her identity, a living identity not a lifeless similarity. Were she now (*per impossibile*) to appear externally the same as 900 or twice 900 years ago, and were she then (as she was most truly) the living Church of God, assuredly now the external similarity would be but the mask of death, and she herself but a mummified corpse, instead of being, as she is, the living Bride of Christ.

[1] Thus the narrow and imperfect notion of the Divinity held by the Jewish Patriarchs, and pointed out by St. Cyril of Alexandria, might be made a pretext for denying the supernatural character of the Jewish religion and for reducing its course to the common level of mere natural religious evolution. In the same way the resemblance of Mosaic and Babylonian legislation may be made a pretext for denying the supernatural character of the Jewish Commonwealth. But it is a sorry induction that rests on observed resemblances only, and ignores observable differences; and a full study of Semitic religion and Semitic antiquities shows in both cases so singular a difference, that unless we are bound over by our presuppositions to reject the supernatural, its interposition is the easiest solution. On the total freedom of the Bible from obscene myths and on the transcendent view of the One God that it displays, see Lagrange, *La Méthode Historique*, 1904, pp. 205, 206; and on the distinction of Mosaic from Babylonian legislation (here again the element of obscenity is a striking test of dissimilarity), see *ibid.*, p. 170, and the articles in the *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*, April, May and August, 1903, by F. X. Kugler.

CHAPTER X.

DEFEAT AND VICTORY.

75. APPARENT FAILURE OF THE CHURCH.

We have counted as the tenth and last antinomy, that the Church is ever being defeated and yet is ever victorious.

Failure and defeat seem from the first the lot of the Church, and the Divine operations everywhere frustrated. Instead of carrying their dominions to the bounds that had been assigned to them,

the chosen people themselves were carried into captivity. There was but one temple of the true God, and this was profaned and destroyed.

And the Old Dispensation was here but the anticipation of the New, wherein the flight of Christ into Egypt appears perpetually re-enacted; and if the hardness of men's hearts extorted divorce under the Old Law, men's unbelief hindered the miracles of Christ under the New. We have to confess the apparent triumph on all sides and through all ages of man's will over God's will, the course of multitudes along the dark and miry paths of error and vice instead of walking in the luminous road which leads to the mountain of Sion, and we are confronted by an appalling mystery—appalling till we understand the necessity of free-will, the power of Divine grace, the efficacy of prayer, the meaning of omnipotence in bonds, the glory of the hidden victories of the Most High.[1]

Moreover, if the Christian Church can show no more than a partial fulfilment of the Kingdom of the Messiah, she knew her own prospective future from the beginning, warned her preachers of the fate before them, that they would be as sheep among wolves, would be hated for Christ's name, nay, that persecution was to be their blessing, and those their encouragement who had been racked, mocked, stoned, cut asunder—the example of men who suffered and who failed.[2] From the beginning she knew and avowed the weakness and seeming folly of her preaching, that yet was to overcome all the strength and wisdom of the world—weakness and folly, lest God's work should perchance be taken for man's work.

Thus over and over again the Divine Pilot seemed to slumber while the ship was sinking; over and over again the Lord of all seems to keep silence, to yield, to fall back, to cast aside all carnal weapons, to leave the issue to time, waiting in a way scarce endurable to our impatience, till pride should be its own correction, broken without hands, dissolved under its own insufficiency.

Indeed if the life of the Church was to be the continuation of the life of her Divine Founder, how could it be other than a life in appearance of defeat and humiliation, and in reality of victory? She must needs practise her Founder's new manner of warfare, whose triumphs are the depths of His abasement; and around her, as they stood around Him, must stand the five mystical figures, bearing on their foreheads their names of Poverty, Abandonment, Rejection, Secrecy and Mortification.[3]

76. HISTORICAL EXAMPLES.

Take, for example, the pontificate of Gelasius, and the year of Christ 493; how forlorn appeared the outlook, how fruitless the conversion of the Empire the century before, how certain on mere human principles the speedy downfall of the Church. All the East was in the hands of traitors to the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon, all the West was under the Arians who rejected the Ecumenical Council of Nicæa; the Pope himself was under an Arian master. "And if one heresy were not enough, Pelagianism was spreading with the connivance of the bishops in the territory of Picenum. In the North of the dismembered Empire, the Britons had first been infected by Pelagianism, and now were dispossessed by the heathen Saxons." The Catholic clergy were oppressed in the Arian kingdoms of Burgundy, Aquitaine and Spain, and Catholic worship suspended by the Arian Vandals of Africa. Nearly the whole of the East sided with the Patriarch of Constantinople (Acacius) in a schism from the West and were partakers of the Monophysite heresy, while outside the Empire the opposite heresy of Nestorianism was advancing on its scandalous progress.[4]

Or is this a mere solitary instance? Go back then some 115 years, just before St. Gregory of Nazianzen had begun to preach at Constantinople (A.D. 378), and confess that the fortunes of the Church, the Christian world being overladen with Arianism and torn by schisms, appeared desperate. Or go forward some ninety years to the time before St. Gregory the Great had begun his pontificate, and confess that the end of the Church appeared at hand, the remnants of Roman civilisation sinking before the desolating advance of the Lombards in Italy; East and West afflicted with famine, earthquake, pestilence; the Christian Britons slaughtered or enslaved

[1] Faber, *Blessed Sacrament*, bk. iii., § 7, bearing the significant title: "The works and ways, the weights and measures, the failure and success of God".—*Cf.* Ramière, *Apostleship of Prayer*, Introduction.

[2] *Grammar of Assent*, chap. x., § 2.

[3] Faber, *Bethlehem*, chap. iii.

[4] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, chap. vi., § 3.

or driven to the barren hills by their pagan foe; Arianism still holding Spain and much of Italy in its embrace.[1] No wonder that St. Columban was not alone in thinking the end of the world at hand.[2]

If we divide, by the number of years, into three equal portions the earthly course that as yet the Church has run, these tempests of disaster just named were all in the first portion, but were to be matched by what was to follow. Let us pass over those in the second portion (A.D. 636-1270), when again and again destruction seemed at last come upon her, as when much of her work was ruined by the Mahometan invaders in the eighth century and the Northmen in the ninth, or when in the tenth century the papacy seemed submerged, or later endangered by the mighty Henries and Frederics of Germany. Let us look rather at the third portion as the nearest to our own time; and mark, among others, three periods of stress, during which, on all principles of historical probability, the Catholic Church was doomed to perish: first the Great Schism when for thirty-seven years her very foundations seemed shattered, the principle of obedience brought into disrepute, the existence of *bona fides*, nay, of sanctity, on both sides, appearing to show providential guidance at war with itself. Secondly came the Protestant outburst, introduced with indescribable calumny and vituperation against the Catholics, with plunder, destruction, and (generally) bloodshed. So England in 1540 wore the aspect of a pillaged country, works of art and stores of learning, the accumulation of centuries, lost and gone. So in France the churches destroyed could be counted by hundreds, the priests and monks butchered by thousands, Catholic rulers declared unworthy of obedience, the Catholic religion outraged by unendurable sacrilege. And at one time, in the face of this storm of self-interest and fanaticism, two-thirds of her previous empire seemed irretrievably lost to the Church. The third period of stress was the triumph of Jansenism in the eighteenth century, when the great Church of France was infected with it to the core, when Joseph the Emperor and the Archduke of Tuscany and the Neapolitan Kingdom seemed about to throw off their allegiance to the Holy See, when Catholic doctrines such as indulgences, auricular confession, and the cultus of the saints, were openly disputed by bishops and professors; when the Jesuits, the special champions of the Holy See against Protestantism and Jansenism, were assailed with deadly persecution in Portugal and Spain, France and Naples, and the Holy See compelled by the menace of a schism to suppress this chosen body-guard in the very hour of need. The powers called Catholic had all turned against the Holy Church and who was to defend her? Who indeed! if not One whose hand is not shortened that it cannot save, or ear heavy that it cannot hear.[3]

And once more in mid-nineteenth century the triumph of heresy and schism seemed assured, when Protestantism had been vociferously reaffirmed in England, was the religion of scientific Germany, was being spread through the world in the two immense and growing empires, the British and the American, while Spain and the vast regions once her colonies seemed plunged in unending civil war and hopeless decay, when more than half of Mexico had been conquered by the United States, and it seemed a mere question of time for the rest to follow; when schismatic Russia was rising daily higher and higher, and the relative number of Catholics compared with heretics and schismatics was daily declining, so that under the sheer weight of numbers the Church seemed about to be overwhelmed.

77. CALAMITIES THE PRELUDE TO VICTORY.

Yet precisely in those years the Master could repeat to desponding followers the timely encouragement *Noli æmulari*, be not jealous of the evil-doers. Man's necessity is God's opportunity. Be patient. You have in you what others have not, an unearthly spirit of endurance, you who can realise the law of moral conflicts, the incoherence of falsehood, the issue of perplexities, the end of all things, the presence of the Judge.[4]

In truth, whoever studies Church history will find the very periods of stress the antecedents of victory, the darkest hour followed by a dawn. So, for example, Constantine followed Diocletian; the three dark times in the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries issued in the respective

[1] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, chap. vi., § 2.

[2] Grisar, *Geschichte Roms und der Päpste*, pp. 452, 453.

[3] *Anglican Difficulties*, Lecture x., 8, 9.

[4] *Present Position of Catholics*, Lecture ix.

conversions, big with blessing, of St. Augustine, of Clovis, of the Anglo-Saxons; the desolations of the dark ages were followed by Hildebrand and the Crusades; the zeal of the Dominicans and Franciscans, and the light of St. Thomas's *Summa*, were, so to speak, the Divine reply to imperial tyranny and Albigensian heresy; the gaping wound of the Great Schism was scarce healed when we meet the flower of Christian art in Fra Angelico, and then in St. Thomas à Kempis the flower of Christian mysticism; Luther and Calvin were but the rough pathway to the fair garden of the new martyrs, to the true reformation by the Council of Trent, to the new missions in East and West; Jansenism was so exalted only to fall the more irretrievably; and the threatened overwhelming of Catholic population by the dissidents fifty years ago has already, like a hundred threats before it, come to naught.

This essay is by pre-eminence a study of facts and how to account for them. How account then for the fact that the Christian Church, through so many centuries, is ever being stricken down, yet ever rising afresh, and though ever dying, dies not, but lives? Or how account for the connected facts, briefly to be noted, that the tongue of calumny and the sword of persecution have been let loose against her from the beginning to this day?

78. PERENNIAL CALUMNY.

The calumnies that overwhelmed the Author of Christianity have been heaped on the heads of His servants; if they have called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household, and the singular beatitude has been singularly fulfilled, that against them should be said all manner of evil. Among the pagans the grossest tales of foulness and blood were current accusations against the early Christians, guilty, it was said, of revolting incest, feeding on children's flesh, giving worship to monsters, their religion a dark and malevolent magic. By the heretics of the early centuries the Catholics were described as apostates, man-worshippers, flesh-lovers, traitors, sinners, servants of Antichrist, their Church a brothel and a synagogue of Satan.[1] The pagans in their turn, when the victory of Christianity rendered the old calumnies impossible, contrived in their literary circles a conspiracy of silence: to ignore the presence and triumphs of the Christians was a primary canon of good style.[2] And later the disasters to the Empire gave a new plausibility to the ancient calumny that the Christians were the cause of every calamity: the Tiber is in flood: cast the Christians to the lion.

But to follow the devious course of calumny would be long. Think, for example, of the pages needed to tell all that was falsely forged and uttered in France against the Holy See and its servants when Philip the Fair was on the throne and Pierre Flotte the minister of his misdeeds. Rather let us keep our eyes at home and look a moment at the great unholy legend that grew up in England against God's Church, dominated our land for 300 years, and if driven at last from its high place, still holding a great multitude under its malevolent spell. Ushered in by covetous mendacity in the reign of Henry VIII., augmented by the crafty slanders of the following reigns, notably of Cecil under James I., the legend reached its climax in the homicidal falsehoods of Titus Oates and the frenzy of Parliament and people under Charles II., renewed in a milder form in the Lord George Gordon riots a century later, and again in 1850 when Newman could sorrowfully exclaim: "Alas! there is no calumny too gross for the credulity of our countrymen, no imputation so monstrous which they will not drink up greedily like water".[3] And in a whole volume, lightened by inimitable humour, he showed in detail the marks of the Protestant view of the Catholic Church; fable its basis, tradition its sustaining power, true testimony insufficient for it, its logical inconsistency, prejudice its life, assumed principles its intellectual ground, ignorance its protection.[4] Yet even such a masterpiece appeared written in vain to those who witnessed the persistent life of the hideous legend in the days of Garibaldi's triumph or of the Vatican Council.

We have no need to inquire how far this particular calumnious legend is still an active force, or whether on the eve of disappearance. For the point is not its death, but the explanation of its long-con-

[1] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, chap. vi., § 2.

[2] T. R. Glover, *Life and Letters in the Fourth Century*, pp. 108, 171, 240.

[3] *Occasional Sermons*, "Christ upon the Waters".

[4] *Present Position of Catholics*, 1st edit., 1851.

tinued life, what the law of the phenomenon, what the meaning of that general and secular calumny of which the English case is one example.

And indeed calumny and obloquy are but the corollary of persecution. "The lion rends his prey and gives no reason, but man cannot persecute without assigning to himself a reason for his act; his very moral constitution forbids contentment with mere brute force; and if he is to wage war with the moral influence of the Church, as good reasons fail, nothing is left to him but to misstate and defame; there is no alternative."[1]

Calumny acts as the incentive to persecution and is its justification and persecution is the final cause of calumny.

So, through all her course, persecution of the Church in multitudinous forms is ever imminent, and the light of martyrdom never failing.

79. THE WITNESS OF THE CHILDREN.

Of this glorious light already, in the sixth chapter, I have said enough, not indeed for the sublimity and all-importance of this department of history, but for the purpose of this volume. Here amid the ranks of the white-robed army let us recall alone the martyr children, whose testimony bears a singular significance. Take first the Roman persecution. Barulas, a boy of seven years old, was scourged to blood for repeating before the heathen judge: There is but one God and Jesus Christ is the true God. "At Merida a girl of noble family, of the age of twelve, presented herself before the tribunal, and overturned the idols. She was scourged and burned with torches; she neither shed a tear, nor showed other signs of suffering. When the fire reached her face, she opened her mouth to receive it, and was suffocated. At Cæsarea, a girl, under eighteen, went boldly to ask the prayers of some Christians who were in chains before the Prætorium. She was seized at once, and her sides torn open with the iron rakes, preserving the while an open and joyous countenance." Again, Peter, Dorotheus and Gorgonius, boys of the imperial household, suffered dreadful torments, dying under them without a shadow of wavering in their Christian faith.[2]

Take a second series of examples from the Japanese persecution, and we see that from the same sacred root spring the same fragrant flowers. "When we read of the boy Lewis, at the age of twelve, who ran like a second St. Andrew to embrace the Cross upon which he was to die; of Magdalen, who, as she was being burned to death, gathered up in her hands the red-hot coals and crowned her brows with them as though they had been roses; of the little martyr of six who, running to keep up with the soldier who led him to death, gazed without dismay at the disfigured corpses of his father and uncle, and then kneeling down and joining his hands, looked up into the face of the executioner with a bright, expectant smile; or of the Christian mother who being herself, by a refinement of cruelty, respited from death, spent her time in teaching her doomed little ones how they were to kneel down, to bow their heads and to cry out Jesus! Mary! with their latest breath . . . and of countless other incidents which closely resemble them, we are tempted to wonder whether we are not breathing the atmosphere of legend. . . . But they are facts, . . . attested for the most part by the evidence of eye-witnesses, and confirmed in many indirect ways by the secular history of Japan as we read it alike in native and in Christian authors."[3]

And can we show none in our own Islands of the West that can be placed side by side with these fair flowers of the Church, reckoned in this life as children and yet, because of the light of Him they love, understanding more than the aged? If we search perchance we may find. Thus at the time of the great Irish famine many depots were opened by proselytising societies for distributing food to the starving people, gratis indeed, but at the price of giving up the Catholic faith and being instructed or numbered as Protestants. Then a certain widow in north-west Kerry (her name and place can be made precise), seeing her children wasting away with hunger, herself unable to save them, and across the way one of these depots filled with food, in her bewilderment and without evil intent asked the eldest boy, who was but ten years old, to cross over and simply show himself at the depot in the hope that the very sight of his wretchedness would move the distributors to minister to his hunger without assail-

[1] *Present Position of Catholics*, Lecture vi.
[2] *Grammar of Assent*, chap. x., § 2 *vers. fin.*
[3] Fr. Herbert Thurston in *The Month*, April, 1905, p. 394.

ing his faith. But then as promptly as if he had been Lewis of Japan or Dorotheus of Rome, the boy answered, "Ah, mother, death were better". So with his two brothers this child of faith and fortitude died slowly of starvation.[1] Nor can those who know the land and the people doubt that many others in the same plight in those years of sorrow and of heroism showed the same spirit of unconquerable faith.

80. THE NEED OF AN EXPLANATION.

This brief survey, these scanty examples, are yet enough to indicate a marvellous history and to justify us in presenting at the domicile of historical science a demand-note for an explanation. It was otherwise in the early centuries of the Church: her eventual triumphs were matters of faith only and not of sight, except as seen in the anticipations of the saints. But as the centuries have increased in number the marvels have accumulated, with the reiterated failure of brute force, of subtle thought, of plausible calumny to bring the Church to her destruction. Or is it nothing, to go back no further than times our grandfathers might have remembered, that in those dark Jansenistic days I have recalled, the sinister French Revolution swept over Europe, breathing fire and slaughter against the Church; and yet when it had passed, not the Church but her arch-foe Jansenism lay dying? Or is it nothing that when reinvigorated and exuberant Protestantism threatened to be an overpowering adversary, two fresh forces, the followers of Strauss and Darwin, seemed to join the hostile camp: and yet it was not the Church but her Protestant foe that they left slowly bleeding to death on the intellectual battlefield? Or nothing that the Church has become insensibly an object of reverence and imitation in the eyes of many to whom formerly she was an object of abhorrence, and multitudes, though outside the visible fold, are taught to their inestimable profit an abundance of Catholic doctrine, and learn, like the Franks under Clovis, to burn what they had adored and to adore what they had burned?

And perhaps the most strange of all these portents is the development of the dogmas of the Christian faith described in the preceding chapter. Consider the incessant mental activity of the upholders of this faith, its living energy, how it grows and is not overgrown, spreads and is not enfeebled, is ever germinating yet ever consistent with itself; and how, in spite of the failure, in points of detail, of gifted Fathers and Saints, the Church has worked out a coherent theory of doctrine after doctrine, when at any time a single false step would have thrown all into confusion.[2] Here are phenomena which exceed the effects of any natural causation; here is an effect without a cause, a body hanging loose in the natural universe lacking a proper place to be assigned to it; here is an earthly power exposed to all the laws of history and yet so defiant of them, that no explanation avails except to acknowledge that this earthly power is something more than earthly, and though dying in its individual members, for they are human, is immortal in its succession, for it is Divine.[3]

This conclusion will be confirmed in the following final chapter on the miraculous and its explanation.

[1] P. S. Dinneen, *Faith and Famine*, 2nd ed., 1902 (Dublin: Gill & Son).

[2] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, chap. xii.

[3] *Lectures on the Turks*, Lecture iii., part ii.

CHAPTER XI.

THE EXPLANATION OF THE MIRACULOUS.

81. DENIAL OF THE POSSIBILITY OF THE MIRACULOUS.

Using miraculous in the wide sense of an interposition in the course of nature by powers superior to those of nature, and in a manner that can be perceived by sight or hearing, or some other sense, we can say that a belief in the miraculous is a characteristic of man; not merely of man in a rude illiterate state, but of civilised man, from the Egyptians, to go back no further, under the First Dynasty, sixty-six centuries ago, to our own day.

Cheaply and easily this gigantic fact has been dismissed by recurrent materialism as a tissue of delusion and fraud. It is assumed as a first principle that we can know phenomena and can know nothing beyond phenomena; that physical uniformity is universal, all things within the

domain of science, this the reign of law, the miraculous consequently non-existent; and as a further consequence that prayer is of necessity in vain, not merely prayer for such objects as for rain or for recovery from sickness, but for such objects as help to resist temptation or to make in some grave matter a wise choice. For mental phenomena proceed on fixed laws (it is said) no less than extra-mental; and as there could be no physical science if we allowed supernatural interposition in the physical world, so there could be no psychology if we allowed the invariable sequence of thoughts, volitions and emotions to be disturbed by the actions of (imaginary) human free will, or by the (imaginary) intervention of a personal Creator and Sanctifier.

It is not my business to deal with this standpoint, which has a certain appearance of logical consistency, and was put before the public in the sixties with triumphant cogency.[1] The amazing assumptions needed to start this theory on its course, and the appalling conclusions that followed from it, have been sufficiently shown by many writers during the past twenty-five years, and have been shown indirectly by the flourishing manufacture of pantheistic drapery to veil the repulsive nakedness of naturalistic atheism. My business here is rather to notice that this theory is unhistorical, giving no proper explanation of the belief and practice of the vast majority of mankind, and leaving without an adequate cause so gigantic an effect. For the denial of miracles indeed there is an adequate cause, as one single instance would render the materialistic position for evermore untenable; and perhaps would ultimately if not instantly be equally fatal to the manifold forms of pantheism. For a genuine miracle is incompatible with monism.

But for a theist the difficulties disappear. God being the Author of nature and of the laws and uniformity of nature on which physical science depends, there is no contradiction in a Divine interposition, which to be a miracle at all, presupposes an ordinary uniformity; else there could be no breach of it in the particular case. Nor is there any difficulty in allowing to God the power to suspend or transcend the ordinary laws of nature, when the free-will of man has been at work for centuries, interposing in the realm of determinism and modifying the aspects of physical nature, transforming the flora and fauna of continents without damage to the science of botany and zoology; nor damaging geology because the banks of the Thames at London are lined with Aberdeen granite that no glacial drift or any other known force of unassisted nature could have lodged there. And science dealing with the general and the abstract has no need to be troubled by Divine interposition in the particular and the concrete.

82. DENIAL OF THE FACT OF THE MIRACULOUS.

But to recognise the theoretical possibility of the miraculous is one thing; to have a due appreciation of historical fact is another thing. To say that the question of miracles seems to be simply a question of evidence,[2] is one thing; to treat the evidence in a judicial spirit is another thing. And just as some writers without proof and in the face of apparent facts take as a first principle that miracles cannot be, and disallow all evidence to the contrary; in the same way other writers who allow that miracles can happen, or even have happened, and allow the continuance of answer to prayer for interior graces and of psychological miracles, yet take as a first principle that physical miracles ceased long ago, and refuse to look any facts in the face that testify to their continuance.

In dealing with unwelcome evidence our frail humanity appears at its weakest. Thus touching a celebrated miracle at Milan to which St. Ambrose and St. Augustine bear testimony, the theological writer Isaac Taylor about the year 1840 wrote as follows:—

"In the Nicene Church, so lax were the notions of common morality, and in so feeble a manner did the fear of God influence the conduct of leading men, that on occasions when the Church was to be served and her assailants to be confounded, they did not scruple to take upon themselves the contrivance and execution of the most degrading impostures."[3]

[1] See the lucid article in the *Dublin Review*, April, 1867, by W. G. Ward on Science, Prayer, Free-will and Miracles, reprinted 1881. It is described in chapter xi. of Mr. Wilfrid Ward's *W. G. Ward and the Catholic Revival.*

[2] As the late Duke of Argyll said some forty years ago in his *Reign of Law.*

[3] *Ancient Christianity*, ii., p. 270, quoted in Dr. Marcus Dods' translation of the *City of God*, p. 485.

And when Newman about ten years later proclaimed his belief in certain specific miracles because of the strength of the evidence for them, he foresaw that the avowal would be imputed by many, as in fact it was, "to insanity, or to an idiosyncrasy, or to imbecility of mind, or to decrepitude of powers, or to fanaticism, or to hypocrisy".[1] And he foresaw, besides, that this rejection of "ecclesiastical miracles," peremptory, *à priori*, without weighing the evidence, would be applied, as in fact it has been, to the Gospel miracles.

The curious Protestant standpoint of the seventeenth century, when ecclesiastical miracles and the aid of saints were rejected as superstitious, and yet the miraculous interposition of evil spirits held to be of constant occurrence, is now only of historical interest; but the same spirit of rejecting evidence is seen to this day. Wishing to be fair-minded, unwilling to impute fraud, our contemporary scholars and men of science cannot have recourse, like the old fanatical Protestants, to the ever-ready explanation in the shape of a crafty priesthood and wilful deception. But their own position grows ever more difficult by the pressure of facts they cannot explain properly; and those specialists in physical science who will not hear of any supernatural explanation of the phenomena of Lourdes or Naples, or of spiritualism,[2] are akin to the specialists in historical science at a loss to explain the wonders recorded at the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury, or those attributed on such good testimony to St. Catherine of Siena or St. Philip Neri; who would have us believe that a Church professing to be founded on miracles handed down with minutest detail, did in fact grow up all suddenly on a make-belief; who would have us admit, in the teeth of documentary evidence, that the *Lausiac History* of Palladius was no genuine history, because it narrated the miraculous life of the hermit St. Anthony;[3] who would leave us no alternative but to write down the supreme foe and the supreme defender of Christianity, the Neo-Platonist philosopher Porphyry and a century later St. Augustine, as both of them stupefied by superstition, and gaping like a half-witted countryman at the tricks of a mountebank.

83. CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF THE SUPERNATURAL TAKEN AS AN HYPOTHESIS.

If one hypothesis fails to solve scientific difficulties or account satisfactorily for the phenomena, the method of science is to try another.

Let us then, as a mere hypothesis, try the Catholic teaching on the supernatural, and see whether it will account in these matters for the records of history and observed phenomena.

We must assume, therefore, that God the omnipotent Creator established the natural order of which the laws are the subject-matter of physical science. We must assume that in the world the action of man, as a being endowed with freedom, has resulted in the artificial order, the subject-matter of moral and historical science. We must assume that God interposes by way of grace or miracle, apart from the two preceding realms of determinism or indeterminism; and this interposition forms the supernatural order. To this may be added (though more strictly called the præternatural order) the action of incorporeal beings on men or things.

Now concerning this grave and highly pertinent matter, we must hold that one part of the world of pure spirits, bodiless, immortal, created before man, created good (Priscillian notwithstanding), created free, misused their freedom to sin, became radically changed, irremediably evil (Origen notwithstanding) and permitted to interfere in man's world as his perpetual enemy because of their enmity to his Creator. Hence, linked by the bond of a common hatred, the evil spirits form a kingdom of darkness under their chief to whom the name of adversary or calumniator has been appropriated (*Satanas*, *Diabolus*), and is often taken collectively to express the evil mind and evil will of all evil spirits.

These spirits are allowed to attack men normally and habitually by tempting them to sin, or by producing illusions that have sin as their final cause; while occasionally and sporadically they are allowed to take possession of man's mental and bodily faculties. But the powers of evil spirits are limited; they can never force the will; as far as wrongdoing is

[1] *Present Position of Catholics*, Lecture vii., 8.

[2] See William James, *The Will to Believe*, 1897, pp. 317-325, on the "scientific" antagonism to the researches and the results of the Society for Psychical Research.

[3] See the evidence by Dom Cuthbert Butler in J. Armitage Robinson's *Texts and Studies*, Cambridge, 1898; and the neglect of the evidence in Mr. T. R. Glover's (otherwise excellent) *Life and Letters in the Fourth Century*, p. 384.

concerned any child can vanquish any evil spirit; and it is heresy not orthodoxy to attribute our sins to the tremendous power of Satan rather than to our own cowardice, effeminacy and self-love. Nor does the ordinary power of evil spirits in external things reach to the suspension of the laws of nature; but they know these laws so well and so far beyond the range of human knowledge, that often they appear to foresee events and produce effects in a manner that simulates the genuine suspension of a law of nature in a divine miracle. Indeed their characteristic is to be surrounded by a cloud of deception in contrast to Divine truth, and to work by illusion and simulation, mockery and caricature.

So it has come about that over against the masterpiece of the holy Church of God, is set up a mock church, the masterpiece of Satan, the union of evil spirits and evil men their agents and dupes; and while the whole life of a Christian is to be conformed to the likeness of the Most High, so by a permission that startles us, the adversary is suffered to become in blasphemous caricature "the ape of God" to use the expression of one of the Fathers;[1] and two cities stand one against the other, the City of God or Christ's Church and the Kingdom of Satan, in never-ceasing warfare.[2] But the final issue is never doubtful. The ceaseless activity and visible work of Satan and his angels, as disclosed in the history of the Church and of individual souls, might indeed appal us did we not know that he is everywhere met and matched by the activity of grace, his wiles unmasked, his schemes baffled, his rage impotent, his head crushed beneath the woman's feet; and those whose eyes are opened like the eyes of the prophet, can see in this secular warfare the horses and chariots of fire that fill the mountains round the servants of God.[3]

And if any should ask why these things are so, and our weakness assailed by a supernatural foe, I might dismiss the question as not here to the point. But I would rather refer to what has already been said in the tenth section touching the permission of evil; and would add here from Faber that as all holiness consists in the personal love of God, this love (beside which all else is nothing worth) is the explanation of all difficulties; explains sin because its forgiveness is the sweetest preacher of Divine love on earth; explains the Kingdom of Satan, because the personality of the evil spirit drives us into personal love of God as our security and refuge.[4]

But this by the way; our immediate task has been not to defend the Church on the supernatural, but to explain it as an hypothesis.

84. FOUND ALONE TO EXPLAIN ALL THE OBSERVED FACTS (AS MAGIC AND POSSESSION).

Now granting this hypothesis, all observed facts and appearances regarding the supernatural will fit into their place and receive adequate explanation.

But stay! the reader may exclaim, What is this? Are we to commit ourselves to accept as sober truth all the tales of the miraculous, carry our heads in our hands like St. Denis, or ride on a broomstick to the witches' Sabbath on the Brocken?

Heaven forbid! But we commit ourselves, with the Church as our guide, to look the facts fairly in the face; and looking we see how here as everywhere she preserves the golden mean, an ever present witness to her Divinity. Given human nature as she presents it, given the supernatural forces good and evil, as she presents them, we must expect a whole mountain of superstitious illusion and deliberate deception, and to see magic in a hundred forms practised from generation to generation. It is not necessary, it is frequently impossible, to determine how much is merely human, a vast department of morbid mental phenomena, and how much is in part also diabolical: indeed, since confusion and darkness are characteristic of evil spirits (on our hypothesis), the human and the super-human action may be inextricably intermingled. And (partly from the hypothesis, partly from *a posteriori* reasoning) we must expect that the action of evil spirits will be intermittent and various according to the forces of good and the particular condition of an age or country. Thus the phenomena of diabolical possession, so

[1] Cited by H. Ramière, *Apostleship of Prayer*, ed. 1891, p. 107.

[2] See St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, especially the Præfatio and lib. xiv., c. 28, and the encyclical of Leo XIII. entitled *Humanum Genus*, published April, 1884, especially the fine exordium.

[3] Faber, *The Creator and the Creature*, bk. iii., chap. ii.

[4] Faber, *The Creator and the Creature*, bk. iii., chap. iv.

minutely described in the New Testament, so especially provided for in the exorcisms of the Church, so clearly distinguished from bodily disease and not to be confused, though in ignorant eyes often confused, with insanity and abnormal mental phenomena—this possession has been found again and again on the first preaching of Christianity to a pagan people, and is seen in modern China, where idiocy, insanity, epilepsy, and hysteria have each their separate names, and are all distinct from diabolical possession.

Take again the extraordinary development of magical practices that grew up in the northern countries, particularly in Germany, in the fifteenth century, fostering, as well as fostered by, the outbreak of Protestantism, and culminating in the dark superstitions of witchcraft that pressed heavily in the seventeenth century like a nightmare on Germany, England and Scotland, while the Latin countries were almost exempt. To suppose that evil spirits had no part in this mental epidemic is almost as hard a supposition to accept as to accept all the foolish tales of the victims, and is to rush from the one extreme of seeing Satan everywhere to the other extreme of seeing him nowhere.

Moreover, the end and aim of the Evil One and his agents being to produce sin, there is an antecedent probability that the visible manifestation of their influence will vary with the circumstances of time and place; and that alternations will be seen (as they have been) of deep superstition and shallow scepticism, each state of mind leading, though by a different road, to the ends of wickedness.

And far from modern science "disproving the devil," it has enabled us better to understand the process of diabolical delusion, by its showing us natural forces hidden from us before, but at all times (on the hypothesis) known to evil spirits, and giving to their deceptions the appearance of an exercise of Divine power.

85. CHARACTER OF CATHOLIC MIRACLES.

We see further in the Church the same avoidance of extremes in the matter of miracles in the stricter sense, wrought by God Himself or His ministers. Uncritical acceptance and uncritical scepticism are both brushed aside. The acceptance of any particular miracle except the dogmatic miracles of her foundation, is not forced by the Church on her children; but at all times she upholds the present possibility of miracles, according to the promise of her Founder,[1] and according to the analogy of divine works, that God would continue what He had begun, and that the very suspension of one order seems to point to another order; so as to make any single miracle only one of a series, and convert the apparent exception and anomaly into an additional law of His providence.[2]

Hence while the history and preservation of the Church, the singular animosity with which she has been assailed, the singular fortitude with which she has been defended, the singular development of her doctrines, the singular fortunes of the Jews and the After-Christians, forbid a natural explanation, and give a strong presumption in favour of the miraculous events on which the Church rests her claim to our acceptance; it follows that, once granted the Apostolic miracles—and if we refuse them we fall into historical nescience and chaos—the continuance of the miraculous down to this day presents no intellectual difficulty. It becomes a question in each case of facts and evidence.

Nor is it necessary to answer as serious objections the multitude of spurious miracles, the obvious motives for their manufacture, the eagerness of a credulous crowd to receive them. As well argue against the existence of genuine diamonds from the multitude of false diamonds, and the obvious motives for making them and wearing them. The test in each case is specific evidence.

And this evidence has been rendered clearer and miracles better established by the progress of science which has shown that various phenomena, formerly held to be miraculous, can be explained by natural causes. For example, the medical investigation of the gangrenous affection known as ergotism enables us to explain naturally certain cures that seemed miraculous; and the accounts of blood flowing from cut loaves, need imply no portent, but only the development in the yeast of the *bacillus prodigiosus*. But then the very accuracy of the details given by the chronicler in these cases where modern science can control them, confirms his accuracy of observation and sober truthfulness in narrating cures for which

[1] John xiv. 12.

[2] *Present Position of Catholics*, Lecture vii.

modern science can provide no natural explanation.[1]

To those who are under the sway of the tyrannous prejudice that physical laws can never be overridden, the detailed evidence appeals in vain. But they leave a whole chapter of human history irremediably in darkness, nay the whole course of human history, and are confronted by a crowd of facts that somehow must be explained away; whereas our reasonable hypothesis exempts us from the Procrustean process of cutting down our facts to the narrowness of our presuppositions.

Presuppositions indeed we must have, but let them be broad and deep and capable of explaining our history and our human nature. As Mr. Wilfrid Ward has well said, summing up Newman's position:—

"Commence by the realisation of the depths of the human soul, of its relations with God, of the probability that God would grant a revelation, of the points of contrast between the Christian revelation and other religions, and facts [of religious history] assume a different colour. If Christianity in its true exhibition is unlike religious fanaticism, and is unique among religions, the antecedent improbability of its miracles to a great extent ceases. An event solitary in human history for its greatness and significance may well bring marvels in its train. The inquirer proceeds then, in comparing it with other religions, to note differences rather than similarities."[2]

The differences! aye there's the rub. And just as between Babylonian and Israelite legislation and morality it is the differences that are the fact of significance, so the differences between miraculous appearances within the Church and without her, are what strike us, whether claimed to be, or denied to be, miraculous; for those without show such feebleness, incompleteness and imitation, compared with the completeness, originality and power of those within. Let us recognise, indeed, or rather affirm that Catholic miracles may utilise and apply as well as override natural causes, and may be under a higher law of causation; for who is to deny that Providence may not here act through intermediaries and bind them by laws whose mystery and subtleness transcend our fragile comprehension. But this much is certain, the striking contrast between the miracles of the Catholic Church and every external attempt at approximation.[3]

86. SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF MIRACLES.

Preaching without practice is proverbially unconvincing; and having urged the need of specification and details, I must myself give some few cases of the miraculous, easily accessible, and, on the hypothesis adopted in this chapter, easily explainable; but on any other hypothesis inexplicable.

Take, first, the recovery from blindness of Severus, one of the guild of butchers at Milan, at the time when St. Ambrose and St. Augustine were there together. The man was well known, had been compelled to abandon his trade because of his blindness, and then recovered his sight by touching the freshly found relics of St. Gervasius and St. Protasius. The details can be read in the twenty-second letter of St. Ambrose translated in Pusey's *Library of the Fathers;* and more shortly the miracle is described in the *Confessions of St. Augustine*,[4] and in his *City of God*.[5] For the needs of modern readers it has been re-stated by Dr. Ryder with admirable clearness and wit.[6]

Take, secondly, the case of the African confessors, a crowd of men who spoke clearly and perfectly when their tongues had been barbarously and completely cut out; a case all the more noticeable because the argument against its cogency, tolerated in the *Apologia*,[7] has been shown by Dr. Ryder to be but an argument of straw.[8]

Take, thirdly, the cure of Innocentius wrought at Carthage under the very eyes of his friend St. Augustine, and minutely described in the *City of God*.[9] The patient had suffered from fistula; had been skilfully operated upon; but one sinus among

[1] See the interesting and highly instructive *Life of St. Hugh of Lincoln*, by the Rev. Herbert Thurston, S.J., London, 1898, pp. 478-483, 505-510, and the Preface, pp. x.-xii.

[2] *W. G. Ward and the Oxford Movement*, chap. xv., *ad fin.* pp. 402, 403.

[3] See the note on miracles appended (pp. 574-578) to Fr. Thurston's *Life of St. Hugh of Lincoln*.

[4] Book ix., chap. vii. [5] Book xxii., chap. viii.

[6] In an article, "On Certain Ecclesiastical Miracles," in *The Nineteenth Century*, August, 1891.

[7] Note B, "On Ecclesiastical Miracles."

[8] *The Nineteenth Century*, *l.c.*

[9] Book xxii., chap. viii. The passage is fairly rendered into English, though not with medical precision, in Dods' translation, Edinburgh, 1872.

the many that had been laid open had escaped the notice of the surgeons. When this deficiency was discovered they long hoped to effect a cure by medical treatment without further operation. For the extreme pain which the patient had suffered from the previous operation, naturally without anæsthetics, caused him to shrink in terror from a second operation. At last they were forced to the sorrowful conviction that there could be no cure without it. The patient then in anger dismissed his medical advisers and called in a famous surgeon of Alexandria, who saw like the others the absolute necessity of a second operation; and with a true sense of professional honour persuaded the patient to allow it to be performed by the previous surgeons, of whose skill he had convinced himself by examining the traces of their previous work. The operation was then fixed for the next day. During the terrible interval some servants of God, Bishop Saturninus among them, and St. Augustine himself, sought to console the patient, who made no doubt he would die of the inevitable torture under the surgeons' hands; and all betook themselves to prayer with such tears and fervour that Augustine cried out in his heart. "O Lord, what prayers of Thy people dost Thou hear, if Thou hearest not these?" Then came the dreaded day; the same spiritual consolers are at the bedside, the surgeons and their frightful instruments are there; the operator makes all ready; he looks for the sinus that is to be laid open (*secandum sinum*); he finds a perfectly healed scar (*firmissimam cicatricem*); and amid unutterable joy and thanksgiving to God the patient is declared cured without an operation.

Then passing over the ages when from lack of civilisation it is more difficult, though by no means impossible, to secure trustworthy evidence,[1] let us take as our fourth illustration the proceedings in later ages of the Roman Congregation of Rites in the process of Beatification and Canonisation; the careful scrutiny of evidence before a miracle is accepted as proved; the distinction of three classes of the miraculous; while in regard to cures seven serious conditions are required before they can be admitted as miraculous.[2] If then we suppose that the whole multitude of miracles proved before the Congregation of Rites, besides many disallowed because not quite reaching the high standard of proof required, are all of them a tissue of ignorance, misunderstanding, delusion and falsehood, we are making an unreasonable supposition.

Fifthly and finally, let us take a few of the many hundred well-authenticated cases of those cured in our own time at the waters of Lourdes, and let this suffice; for it is no history of thaumaturgy that I am writing, but rather a brief survey of Church history as the key to universal history.

In 1869 Leonie Chartron from la Nièvre having for some five years suffered from Pott's disease (caries of the spine) was cured suddenly on being bathed in the spring at Lourdes, her serious deformity (hunch-back) disappearing instantly.[3]

Peter Rudder, a rural labourer of Jabbeke in Flanders, was suffering since 1867 from gangrenous wounds due to a broken leg. Many doctors saw him, declared the wounds incurable, and amputation, which the patient refused, the only remedy. He was taken in 1875 to the Lourdes Grotto of Oostacker near Ghent, was instantaneously cured there, the broken bones reunited, the wounds gone, crutches needed no longer, capacity for work no less than before his accident. He was at work and vigorous in 1892 when a medical inquiry was made into

[1] *E.g.*, the suppleness a week after death of the limbs of St. Hugh of Lincoln, to which fact his quite trustworthy chaplain testifies. See p. 549 of the *Life of St. Hugh* by Fr. Thurston, who adds the following note: "There is no class of alleged miracles for which the evidence seems to me to be so overwhelmingly conclusive as the marvellous occurrences which are constantly recorded in connection with the bodies of the saints after death. Whatever explanation may be given of them, it is impossible to doubt the facts. The perfect flexibility of the limbs many days after death, the freedom from any sign of corruption, the sweet fragrance exhaled from them, and many other remarkable phenomena, are attested in case after case by witnesses whose veracity there is not the least reason to suspect. . . . Neither have these phenomena become any less frequent in modern times. . . . The only difference . . . is that in our day the evidence is more carefully sifted."

[2] These conditions are: (1) that according to medical testimony the illness has been grave and inveterate; (2) not at a stage when amendment may be expected; (3) that it has been medically treated; (4) that convalescence has been sudden or speedy; (5) not ensuing on some physical crisis; (6) that the cure has been complete; (7) and persistent.

[3] George Bertrin, *Histoire Critique des Événements de Lourdes*, 5me édit., 1905, Paris, Lecoffre, pp. 176, 177.

his case and its supernatural character confirmed. In 1898 he died of pneumonia at the age of seventy-five and twenty-three years after his cure. In the following year the body was exhumed and the clear traces found both of the fracture and of its mysterious healing.[1]

Francis Vion-Dury, a soldier, suffering for seven years from double detachment of the retina and thus incurably blind, at last in 1890, at the advice of the nuns of the hospice near Bellegarde, applied some water from Lourdes to his eyes. At the third application he felt a sharp pain as of a knife, and then in his own words, as suddenly as a rifle shot he found he was cured, and henceforth his sight was approximately normal.[2]

Among children cured at Lourdes have been Paul Mercère, aged twelve months, in 1869, of congenital hernia; A. Mertens, aged nineteen months, in 1895, of paralysis of the right arm; Yvonne Aumaitre, aged twenty-three months, in 1896, of a double club-foot; Ferdinand Balin and George Lemesle, both aged two and a half years, one in 1895 of a deformity (*déviation*) of the knee, the other in 1897 of infantile paralysis.[3]

Theresa Rouchel of German Lorraine had been attacked in 1890 by lupus. Ulceration in the face and mouth gradually grew worse, and was pronounced by one doctor after another, including two German specialists, to be incurable. Both to herself and to others she was an object of horror. She reached Lourdes on 4th September, 1903, after a painful journey, the bandages over her face needing incessant renewal. Then the next day during a procession of the Blessed Sacrament she was suddenly cured; became on her return to Metz an object of wonder and of inquiry to the German police and the doctors; and by a strange coincidence, almost in the words addressed by the Jews to the blind man in the ninth chapter of St. John's Gospel, she was called upon to describe her cure. Indeed it was a case for inquiry, as two perforations of the palate and right cheek, deep and of long standing, had disappeared suddenly, and skin and muscles had been suddenly formed, replacing the flesh that had perished, and joined on to the sound flesh. There was no relapse, and as late as February, 1905, the cure was perfectly maintained.[4]

[1] Bertrin, pp. 207-232, and in the Appendix, pp. 514-520.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 140-43.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 182, 183.

87. THE MIRACULOUS IN ITS FITTING PLACE.

The contemporary phenomena of Lourdes confirm the point already emphasised how great is the difference between the miraculous within and without the pale of the Catholic Church, between the genuine and the spurious. Let the student regard on the one hand the precision, the lucidity, the quiet observation, the constant presence of reason characteristic of such cases as I have given, and how the medical office (*Bureau des constatations médicales*) established at Lourdes can be described as *une sorte de clinique du miracle*;[5] and then on the other hand let him regard the extravagances of spiritualism, or again (in Dr. Ryder's phrase) the obscure amalgam of brain waves, faith healing, and sympathetic enthusiasm used to account for facts that cannot be denied; and he will be struck by the significant contrast. Significant also is the absence at Lourdes of "suggestion" or "auto-suggestion" in any proper sense. No certainty of cure is taught or felt: the only certainty is the belief in God's power to heal if He will. And the dubious present results, the admitted limitations, and the gradual operation of "psychotherapeutics" are quite unlike the undeniable, the unlimited, and the speedy results of the waters of Lourdes.[6]

But on the hypothesis of this chapter

[4] Bertrin, pp. 308-329.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 111.
[6] See the careful study of the *Interpretation of the Facts* given by Bertrin, pp. 147-199, where he shows that neither the physical character of the waters (very ordinary), or the more plausible explanation of suggestion, can by any possibility account for the cures. In the note on miracles to the *Life of St. Hugh of Lincoln*, Fr. Thurston (writing seven years before M. Bertrin) has the following pertinent passage: "Nothing seems to me more striking than the limitations of those faith cures . . . induced by Professor Charcot and his associates. The cures of Catholic miracles are in numberless instances complete, permanent and instantaneous. The faith cures are partial, temporary, and gradual. The signs wrought by Moses and Aaron did not more completely transcend those of Pharaoh's magicians than the miracles of Lourdes surpass those of the Paris hospitals. If the Salpêtrière physicians would take an hysterical patient with an ulcer of many years' standing, persuade her she is about to be cured, and then at the psychological moment remove the bandage and show the ulcer healed, there would be a real parallel to Catholic miracles" (pp. 576, 577).

physical and historical science are delivered from grave embarrassment by being delivered from the burdensome presupposition that the miraculous is impossible. Remove this prejudice, and then without serious difficulty all manner of phenomena can be fitted each into its proper place, and order succeeds to chaos. For grace being built upon nature, keeps its own foundation in good repair. the trustworthiness of our reasoning powers and the trustworthiness of our senses and the trustworthiness of evidence are supported by revelation against a false idealism and a morbid criticism that would dissolve all into nescience. The natural and the supernatural are not indeed to be confounded together, but lucidly distinguished; not foolishly fused, nor again foolishly set, one against the other, in hostility; their relations are rather of harmony and alliance.

In this essay it is not questions of physical science or psychology that have been the primary concern, but those rather of historical logic, and to show that universal history is orderly and intelligible by the very presence of the one great exception to all ordinary rules, the one supernatural Church. I have sought to show by a cumulation of evidence drawn both from the fortunes of those outside her borders, and from ten of the antinomies or seeming contradictions in her life and teaching, that her history can be explained on no natural principles; that there is no accounting for her strange combination of success and failure, for her vitality and for the extraordinary and secular violence of the enmity against her, for her change and yet her sameness, for her divisions and yet her unity, for her scandals and yet her sanctity, for her seeming opposition to earthly government, culture and material civilisation yet all the while their sustenance, for her combined austerity and joyfulness—no solution for such a cumulation of marvels but to acknowledge the Church as supernatural. Then the question of the miraculous that is so troublesome to physical and historical science, becomes a tractable quantity and can take its place as part of a wider phenomenon.

Thus at last we seem to have reached the long-desired summit and long-sought conclusion, that the supernatural is the key to the natural; that the difficulties of history find their solution in theism; that Christianity solves the difficulties of theism; that the Holy Catholic Church solves the difficulties of Christianity; that Church history, properly understood, solves the difficulties of Catholicism; that Church history therefore is all-important for the understanding of universal history and for our mental outfit; that without it we are compelled on matters the gravest, on a field the widest, on subjects of the most fascinating interest, on issues incomparable, to remain in irremediable darkness.

EPILOGUE.

88. *LUX INTER UMBRAS ET IMAGINES.*

Am I then to end with a note of triumph over fallen foes? Not so. For such is not the temper suited to this world of obscure images, or to the feeble state of man, who is warned when he thinketh he standeth to take heed lest he fall. Indeed, such exultation would contradict the words written already at the close of the First Part.

Therefore let no one think the previous reasoning is meant to be a demonstration, or that the evidence is so irresistible that our reason is forced to admit the conclusion; for there is lacking a cogency that would overpower us into conviction. Nor is the deficiency due merely, though much is due, to the many imperfections of the present writer, but due also to the very nature of the case; so that even in the best of hands there must be a cloud over the argument. For the Church cannot expect her light to be more overwhelming in its brilliance than the light of the moral law; and her proofs are imperfect or inferential, unable to enforce acceptance on the unwilling. Let the Master who has spoken so often in these pages, speak once more:—

"The sense of right and wrong, which is the first element in religion, is so delicate, so fitful, so easily puzzled, obscured, perverted, so subtle in its argumentative methods, so impressible by education, so biased by pride and passion, so unsteady in its course, that, in the struggle for existence amid the various exercises and

triumphs of the human intellect, the sense is at once the highest of teachers, yet the least luminous."[1]

Again, "Those higher sciences . . . Morals and Religion, are not represented to the intelligence of the world by intimations and notices strong and obvious, such as those which are the foundation of physical science. . . . Instead of being obtruded on our notice, so that we cannot possibly overlook them, they are the dictates either of Conscience or of Faith. They are faint shadows and tracings, certain indeed, but delicate, fragile, and almost evanescent, which the mind recognises at one time not at another, discerns when it is calm, loses when it is in agitation. The reflection of sky and mountains in the lake is a proof that sky and mountains are around it, but the twilight or the mist or the sudden thunderstorm hurries away the beautiful image, which leaves behind it no memorial of what it was. . . . How easily can we be talked out of our clearest views of duty: how does this or that moral precept crumble into nothing when we rudely handle it! how does the fear of sin pass off from us, as quickly as the glow of modesty dies away from the countenance! and then we say 'It is all superstition'. However, after a time we look around, and then to our surprise we see, as before, the same law of duty, the same moral precepts, the same protests against sin, appearing over against us, in their old places, as if they had never been brushed away, like the Divine handwriting upon the wall at the banquet."[2]

It is not otherwise with the Holy Church. The evidence may grow troubled; objections may close over her like a dark mist coming up from the sea, and her face be hidden. Or can she expect her own evidence to be clearer than that of the supreme truths, the being of a God, the certainty of a future retribution, the claims of the moral law, the reality of sin, the hope of supernatural help? truths of which she is the one undaunted defender. And by every sort of persecution she has ever paid, and must pay, for that defence the penalty. The world is a rough antagonist to spiritual truth; sometimes with mailed hand, sometimes with pertinacious logic, sometimes with a storm of irresistible facts that are the truth, but not the whole truth or the most important truth, it presses on; and the Church cannot hope for any normal visible interposition to protect her servants and sacraments from contempt or violence. God will not enforce the acceptance of the Divine message; He will not overawe irreverence by a display of His majesty. Rather He discloses Himself to us by hiding Himself and seems by the apparent helplessness of the Divine ways, and by giving the fullest play to our free-will, to raise us to the most submissive and intelligent worship. Thus it is by the first principles deeply lodged in the heart of man that God leaves His Church to gain her footing and achieve her success: the sense of right and wrong, the consciousness of transgression, the pangs of guilt, the dread of retribution, the yearning for more than earthly love. Thus again it is to man's feeble hands that is entrusted the guardianship of Christ's priceless truth, nay, even the defence of Christ's Immaculate Bride.

If these things are so, how all-important is a true delineation of the Church, how enkindled should be every ambition to achieve so incomparable an end! It was worth while when the Roman Empire stretched over Western Europe and Northern Africa and hither Asia, to attempt the history of so magnificent a growth. It was worth while again when the British Empire within the brief span of some hundred years had arisen and spread over the earth, to attempt the history of such a progress, and trace the humble sources of so mighty a stream. Still more was it worth while in the days of Eusebius of Cæsarea, though he might shrink from the task as too great for his strength, to gather up into one body the scattered records of the Church, to set forth her glories, and to answer the pagan reproach that she was but a thing of yesterday, by showing her foundations to have been laid with the foundations of the world.[3] And now, after the further lapse of nearly sixteen centuries, how much more is it worth while to set forth the annals of the faith, to tell the lengthened tale of heroism, to discern the home of grace and sanctity; to display man in his true manhood, and our reason sustained against the persistent attacks of

[1] *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, Section on Conscience.

[2] *Idea of a University*, "Christianity and Medical Science".

[3] Eusebius Pamphili, *Hist. Eccles.*, Preface. Compare also the Prefaces of Livy and Macaulay.

ever-varying unreason; to recognise the undying torch-bearer, dissipating the darkness of our mortal life till the time of darkness is over, and she goes forth, faithful and true, to meet the immortal Bridegroom with whose heart she has ever been in sweet accord (*cor ad cor loquitur*) and to pass into all truth and never-fading light (*ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem*).

Lovers gaze gladly on the likeness of one they love; and gladly therefore should we gaze on the authentic portrait of the Church, and dwell lovingly on the features of the never-failing friend of all the sons of men: this Church who by her very nature is the loving mother of us all; the mother of those whose fresh youth is not yet dimmed by sophistry, nor made crafty by deception, nor soured by disappointment, nor hardened by iniquity; the mother who may be thrust aside in the hour of prosperity, but is the ever ready refuge, to whom those can turn whose burdens are heavy, whose hopes are shattered, whose days are drawing to a close, whose hearts are aching with irremediable sorrow. Ah! indeed in this dark world of illusion it is worth while to make her known; for to know her is to love her.

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